



GENIUS DOCTOR: BLACK BELLY MISS

BOOK 02

North Night

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

Genius Doctor: Black Belly Miss

(絕世神醫：腹黑大小姐)

by

North Night

(夜北)

Synopsis

She was a peerless genius in the 24th Century – all she needed was a silver needle and she could practically bring anyone back from the dead.

After an explosion, she crossed over into a strange world; everyone calls her “Miss.” The previous “Miss” before had no contractual spirit, was weak and incompetent, and even the fiancé comes over with a new love and bullies her?

Now that she has taken over, who dares to act so presumptuously around her? With needles in hand, the world is for her to own! Wherever she goes, miracles follow! However, she saved a pest. What was she thinking when she saved that man. His stunning demeanor and impeccable face is a huge contrast to his cruel actions. He tries all ways to win her over.

This is an interesting cross over story with some magic, romance and a black bellied miss as the main character.

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Chapter 201: “Soul Calming Jade (3)”

Ravaged by the little black cat’s claws, Little Lotus hugged his knees and sat sobbing in a corner of the room.

Jun Wu Xie carried Little Lotus, who was crying so hard that he was catching his breath between sobs, and Jun Wu Xie hugged him tightly to comfort him.

“Can you be sure that is the Soul Calming Jade?” Jun Wu Xie was curious about the Soul Jade..... She meant the Soul Calming Jade. If that half of the Soul Jade was the Soul Calming Jade of the spirit world, that explained its ability to draw in souls.

The Soul Calming Jade was used to protect and heal a soul, and it only worked on incomplete souls. Hence, when a normal person touches it, there would be no adverse effects.

It was different in her case, she and the little black cat had merged their souls earlier and transversed to another age, and took over Jun Wu Xie’s body. Her soul had not completely harmonized with the body and the Soul Calming Jade identified that as incomplete and had tried to suck her soul into the jade to heal.

“I..... I’m not sure, I only know that it looks exactly like the picture that I saw and it contains spirit energy of the Spirit World.” With Jun Wu Xie’s comforting hands, Little Lotus had somewhat calmed down and he stole a glance at the little black cat and found that little black cat was still keeping its eye on him and he immediately turned his face to hide within Jun Wu Xie’s embrace.

Bad kitty!

Apperance and energy. Little Lotus had verified these two points, and to top it off with Jun Wu Xie’s brush with the Soul Jade, she could almost be certain that was the real Soul Calming Jade.

An artifact of the Spirit World, how did it land up in Qi?

What kind of a place was the Spirit World? The Qing Yun Clan was anxious to get their hands on the Soul Jade, did they know that the Soul Jade was in fact the Soul Calming Jade?

One tiny Soul Jade had brought countless uncertainties, and Jun Wu Xie was unable to make any headways towards a conclusion.

If the Soul Jade was the Soul Calming Jade, and if she possessed the Soul calming Jade that had the ability to heal souls, it could very well become the medium to resurrect Jun Gu.

The only thing she was sure of at the moment, was that she would not be handing over the Soul Jade to the Qing Yun Clan. She will have to get her hands on the other half that was with Mo Qian Yuan!

Having made a decision, Jun Wu Xie readied to set off to the Imperial Palace.

“It’s so late into the night, where are you going?” Jun Wu Yao leaned lazily against the door and looked at Jun Wu Xie in the room, glancing passingly at the open coffin on one side of the room.

The little girl had rather unique interests. She moved a coffin into her room?

Jun Wu Xie was surprised to see Jun Wu Yao, but this time, her expression did not show the usual cold and frost, but one of indifference.

“Come with me.” Jun Wu Xie looked up at Jun Wu Yao.

This time, Jun Wu Yao was the one surprised.

What..... What did he hear?

Go with her?

The little girl had just hours ago showed him an amicable side of her and now she wants to elope?

Happiness came too suddenly, and the smile on his face almost

reached his ears.

His mood soaringly great, Jun Wu Yao walked to stand beside Jun Wu Xie, one could almost drown in the gentleness in his eyes.

“Anywhere in the world, where do you want to go?”

Jun Wu Xie looked at Jun Wu Yao, who was beaming radiantly, and curtly replied: “Imperial Palace.”

“.....”

“It’s great that you are here. With your skills, you can escape the notice of the Qing Yun Clan, and smuggle me into the Imperial Palace. That should be a piece of cake for you.” Jun Wu Xie said in all seriousness. She did not know why Jun Wu Yao was here, his prowess was never in doubt.

Chapter 202: “Soul Calming Jade (4)”

The smile remained on Jun Wu Yao’s face, but the light in his eyes faded like the tide that did not come back to shore.

Jun Wu Xie was oblivious to the change and rambled on: “No need to harm them this time, I only need to see Mo Qian Yuan.”

That’s just great, I just need to send her into the arms of that damned Crown Prince!

Murder brewed deep within Jun Wu Yao’s eyes. Alright, he will bring her there, and at the same time, get rid of that eyesore, the newly minted Emperor!

When she didn’t hear a reply from Jun Wu Yao, Jun Wu Xie raised her head and saw the change in Jun Wu Yao’s eyes, and she bit her lip in contemplation.

She had forgotten that between Jun Wu Yao and her, they were not just strangers who made use of each other to achieve their goals.

Summoning up all that she had learnt since her rebirth from the Jun Family’s father and son duo in family interpersonal communication skills, Jun Wu Xie stiffened, and the words barely tumbled out of her mouth.

“Big brother?”

“.....” A bolt of lightning struck Jun Wu Yao’s heart!

Winter left, and the ice and snow melted, and spring was the time of rebirth!

The chill of murder in his heart had thawed with the coming of spring and warmed his heart!

Jun Wu Yao was silent, as his tall slender frame flashed to come beside Jun Wu Xie, he whipped out his strong arms, and curled them around Jun Wu Xie tiny body. With a great leap, they soared

into the air!

Jun Wu Xie instinctively reached her hands around Jun Wu Yao's neck as a single leap had brought them up halfway into the skies. He carried her as they flew through the air, the stars above seemingly within reach if she reached out for them.

"Wu Xie." Jun Wu Yao's sounded in her ears amid the rush of the wind.

"Hmm?"

"Say it again." The slightly hoarse voice was tinged with anticipation.

Jun Wu Xie stared blankly and was thought on it a moment before she realised what Jun Wu Yao was talking about.

"Big brother."

The arms curled around Jun Wu Xie tightened, squeezing so tightly almost crushing her.

"Wherever you want to go, whatever you want to do, big brother will be with you. Alright?" Jun Wu Yao lowered his head and looked at Jun Wu Xie in his arms. She was so petite and light, but at that moment, she weighed a ton, and he had to summon all his strength to hold her or she might disappear from his grasp.

Jun Wu Xie sensed the turmoil of emotions in Jun Wu Yao and felt puzzled, and a sudden realization dawned on her.

This big guy might be extremely strong, but his heart might just be like hers.

The first time she had felt the care and concern from Jun Xian and Jun Qing, she had reacted in this exact same way.

Jun Wu Yao had only interacted with her and nobody else. He had treated her as the benefactor who saved his life and had developed a sense of reliance on her.

Jun Wu Xie who had been deprived of love, naturally linked Jun

Wu Yao's abnormal behaviour to her own bitter experience.

"Alright." She nodded slightly.

She had Grandfather, Uncle, and maybe Father in the future. Adding a big brother to family was not too much to ask.

Jun Wu Yao smiled in satisfaction. He did not know what it was, that made this ignorant little girl finally open up, but no matter what it was, he was feeling fantastic!

The two of them with their fates closely entwined, had two totally opposing definitions for the two words, 'big brother'.

Within the Lin Palace, little black cat sat in the courtyard, and stared up at the sky, looking at the diminishing speck, trembling in its inadequacy.

[Oh my! My Mistress has been kidnapped again!]

[Mistress! Are you abandoning me!?!]

[Bring me along!]

Little Lotus who stood on one side, quietly scurried his short legs, and went towards the room, clambering towards the cabinet where the Jade Nectar was kept.

Chapter 203: “Soul Calming Jade (5)”

Under the dark canopy of night, the palace guards within and without the Imperial Palace were responsible for the security where they patrolled in twos. None of them had noticed, a dark shadow soaring past above their heads.

Jun Wu Xie was held in Jun Wu Yao's arms, experiencing her first 'flight'.

“Over there.” Jun Wu Xie pointed out the palace that was Mo Qian Yuan's sleeping chambers without hesitation.

Jun Wu Yao's face darkened, and descended towards the spot Jun Wu Xie indicated.

The guards outside the palace saw a shadow suddenly land from the skies and they almost dropped their weapons in shock. They stared at the intruder and before they called out, they saw that the shadow carried someone in his arms and recognized her to be the Young Miss of the Lin Palace, Jun Wu Xie!?

It was widely known throughout the whole Imperial City, that Jun Wu Xie and Mo Qian Yuan were 'madly in love', and were all waiting for Mo Qian Yuan to issue an edict, to invite Jun Wu Xie to inhabit the East Palace, that was reserved for the Empress.

They realised that the future Empress had come to visit the Emperor's sleeping chambers in the dead of the night, and the shocked guards clamped their mouths shut immediately. Their eyes then wandered to the man standing, carrying their future Empress.

Just one look at him, and their legs turned to jelly, almost stumbling where they stood.

The man's exuded a terrifying and imposing aura, and his eyes made them tremble in fear.

“Is His Majesty inside?” Jun Wu Xie asked as she jumped off from

Jun Wu Yao's arms, not noticing the eyes filled with regret behind her as she turned to face the guards.

"Yes." The guards replied firmly.

Jun Wu Xie just walked towards the chambers with asking to be announced.

Jun Wu Yao followed behind her and the guards wanted to step up and question his intentions when they found they lacked the courage to take a single step nearer to the man. They only managed to gulp as he stepped past them and stood silently by the doors.

(Your Majesty, we were not slacking in our duty, it was just that the man the Empress brought was too overwhelmingly scary!!)

Jun Wu Xie pushed hard on the doors and sauntered right into the chambers and Mo Qian Yuan froze while he was undressing for bed.

Mo Qian Yuan turned and a corner of his mouth twitched when he saw Jun Wu Yao standing at the entrance to his chambers with a sour look on his face. Mo Qian Yuan's arm was still hooked on his belt burly, and the clothes that hung off his shoulders showed off a sculpted muscular chest.

Although Mo Qian Yuan had been sustained persecution for a long time, under Jun Wu Xie's careful nursing and his own persistent hard work, his body did not look too bad too.

"Soul.... Mmmph." Jun Wu Xie had not seen the awkwardness of the situation wanted to step up closer to discuss about the Soul Jade when a warm palm covered her eyes.

Mo Qian Yuan looked quizzically at the man behind Jun Wu Xie, and saw the arrogantly good looks and his imposing manner, and they had not met before.

What startled Mo Qian Yuan more were his seemingly bottomless black eyes.

“Indecent sight” Jun Wu Yao said softly to Jun Wu Xie, but his eyes jet black eyes were like two swords and they pricked Mo Qian Yuan all over. Those eyes looked like they wanted to rip him apart. His ‘killer’ eyes and his gentle tone of voice highlighted the great contrast between his actions and feelings.

Mo Qian Yuan wasn’t that dumb and caught the meaning behind those eyes, and he hastened to dress, putting on the clothes he had just removed, and the prickly feeling eased off after he dressed.

Only then, was Jun Wu Yao willing to release his hand that covered Jun Wu Xie’s eyes.

After regaining her sight, Jun Wu Xie was still clueless about what happened. She looked at Jun Wu Yao and when she did not get much of a reaction from him, she brushed it off in pursuit of more important matters, and walked quickly further into the Emperor’s sleeping chambers, eager to discuss about the Soul Jade.

Chapter 204: “Might (1)”

“And this is?” Mo Qian Yuan shrank back a little from Jun Wu Yao who was standing behind Jun Wu Xie. He sensed overwhelming danger from the man.

“Jun Wu Yao, my..... big brother.” It was Jun Wu Xie’s first time to introduce Jun Wu Yao to someone.

Big brother? Mo Qian Yuan was filled with suspicion. He did not remember that the Jun Family had such a person, but he saw a brief flash of joy in the dangerous man’s eyes when Jun Wu Xie uttered the word ‘brother’.

That night, when Jun Wu Yao had rescued Jun Xian and brought him to the Imperial Palace gates, all eyes had been focused on Jun Xian, and no one had really noticed Jun Wu Yao then.

“What is so important that you came to find me so late in the night?” Mo Qian Yuan stepped away from Jun Wu Xie subconsciously, in order to distance himself from the dangerous Jun Wu Yao.

Jun Wu Xie replied simply: “The Soul Jade.”

“Soul Jade? Did you really.....”

Jun Wu Xie knew what he was going to say and shook her head resolutely.

“I will not hand the Soul Jade over to the Qing Yun Clan, and I want the other half of the Soul Jade that is with you.”

“What!?” Mo Qian Yuan exclaimed in wide eyed shock, looking at Jun Wu Xie in disbelief.

She wants to keep the Jun Family’s Soul Jade and..... she wants the Imperial Family’s half as well?

Has she gone mad?

“Wu Xie, what do you want the Soul Jade for? It’s just a symbolic

ordinary piece of jade, and if you want, I can have people acquire better quality jade for you! To go against the Qing Yun Clan for a measly piece of jade isn't the best decision you can make." Mo Qian Yuan had always trusted in Jun Wu Xie's decisions, but this time, it made him want to pull all his hair out in frustration.

Jun Wu Xie must have realised the consequences, right?

"Are you giving it or not?" Jun Wu Xie asked simply, her eyes narrowed. The Soul Jade being the Soul Calming Jade, Jun Wu Xie did not have the intention to explain it to Mo Qian Yuan as she could not afford to be careless with this matter that concerned Jun Gu.

This was the first time Jun Wu Xie had directed her icy stare at Mo Qian Yuan and he had a taste of the chill that that same stare had brought to Mo Xuan Fei and his gang.

Cold sweat beaded on his forehead. "If you want it, I will give it to you, but..... what about the Qing Yun Clan? You have seen it yourself. They are determined to get the Soul Jade and will stop at nothing to get it."

"Give it to me and I will handle them." Jun Wu Xie had no intention to shake hands and make peace with the Qing Yun Clan.

When she had made Bai Yun Xian take the poison, she knew then that she and the Qing Yun Clan could not coexist together.

Mo Qian Yuan's heart sank into his shoes at Jun Wu Xie's words. "You would go against the Qing Yun Clan!? No! Wu Xie! You have seen Jiang Chen Qing's powers! Even with the Rui Lin Army, we cannot stand up to the might of the twenty odd exponents in their delega....."

Mo Qian Yuan could not finish his statement, the room was suddenly pervaded with an overpowering pressure. In the next moment, a mountainous force crushed upon his shoulders. That moment alone, made his whole body shake uncontrollably, making

him lose all strength in his legs and he fell to the floor with a loud thud. His sweat flowed unabated, forming a pool around him upon the floor.

“Do as she says.” The voice was filled with power that rang within his ears. The voice had not been loud, but it had made his ears prick with stinging pain and blood trickled down a corner of his mouth, dripping onto his knees.

Chapter 205: “Gamble (1)”

His voice alone had inflicted such heavy injuries upon his body, that overwhelming force had almost scared the lights out of him.

Green spirit? Blue spirit? Or was it the legendary violet spirit.....

Mo Qian Yuan had absolutely no idea which level Jun Wu Yao's skills had reached. He was that powerful without even releasing his spiritual powers!

Such a terrifying power existed under the heavens?

“Enough.” Jun Wu Xie's voice rang out just in time. She did not know if it was Jun Wu Yao's doing, but the force that struck at Mo Qian Yuan did not affect Jun Wu Xie in the slightest and she could not know how terrifying it was. She could only guess at its impact by looking at the slumped form of Mo Qian Yuan.

At the same moment Jun Wu Xie finished her statement, the force upon his body lifted and disappeared. He summoned every ounce of his remaining strength and he struggled hard to stand, and fear lingered in his heart as he looked at Jun Wu Yao.

Who would have thought that such a man who possessed such heaven defying strength to be concealed by Jun Wu Xie's side? With him, Jun Wu Xie did not have to fear the Qing Yun Clan.

With such power, the twenty odd in the delegation would be a pushover. Even if the Qing Yun Clan Sovereign had come himself, he might be subjected to the same humiliation of defeat.

“Soul Jade.” Jun Wu Yao asked of Mo Qian Yuan.

Mo Qian Yuan wiped off the blood from his mouth and stole a glance at Jun Wu Yao. Without hesitation or any protests this time, he ordered for the Soul Jade to be brought.

“Wu Xie.” After the task had been assigned, he asked Jun Wu Xie in trepidation: “You said you would deal with the Qing Yun Clan,

are you intending to ask your..... big brother to do it? To have them.....” Mo Qian Yuan made a sweeping motion across his neck with his hands.

“Yes.” Jun Wu Xie replied truthfully.

Mo Qian Yuan recoiled in shock.

Just like that?

Wasn't that too brutal?

“The Qing Yun Clan might not have been too cordial, but they had not committed any outrageous atrocities either, and you have decided to A tad bit overboard, isn't it?” Mo Qian Yuan knew that although the Qing Yun Clan would not give up on the Soul Jade, Jun Wu Xie's somewhat seemingly hasty decision was a little bit hard to swallow.

Moreover, the delegation was not the whole of the Qing Yun Clan. If anything were to happen to them, the Qing Yun Clan would move in retaliation for sure.

Can a single Jun Wu Yao, stand against the vengeance of Qing Yun Clan's might and of their borrowed swords?

If possible, Mo Qian Yuan would prefer to keep the peace and settle things amicably.

Jun Wu Xie did not reply but just looked at the conflicted Mo Qian Yuan. She understood his concerns. He was now the Emperor of Qi and everything that he did, he had to consider the interests of the kingdom at large. But, being too compassionate and lenient, might not make a good ruler.

Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes and asked slowly: “You think I'm being too brutal?”

With Jun Wu Xie's query, he felt the hairs on the back of his neck stand as the chilling gaze locked onto him once again.

“No, I was just think we should not kill unjustifiably.”

Jun Wu Xie surveyed Mo Qian Yuan. She chose Mo Qian Yuan to ascend the throne because he was simple and kind, unlike his cruel and unscrupulous father and brother. He was groomed to become the shield for the Jun Family, and this shield was showing itself to be strong and sturdy, and was rather blunt.

It could only defend but not attack.

She kept silent for awhile before she said: “You’re being a softy.”

Mo Qian Yuan’s face darkened. It was not that he was being too soft, it was Jun Wu Xie being too brutal.

“Let’s make a bet.” Jun Wu Xie turned to Mo Qian Yuan. It was time to sharpen the shield a little.

“What kind of bet?”

“Whether Qing Yun Clan will seek their own death.” Jun Wu Xie said, her eyes narrowed just slightly.

Chapter 206: “Wager (2)”

“What do you mean?” Mo Qian Yuan’s heart skipped a beat.

“I am keeping the Soul Jade at all costs, and will not release it to anyone. Aren’t you thinking that I want to kill them all off for no good reason and am being vicious and brutal? Then let’s see what the Qing Yun Clan will do when we refuse to hand over the Soul Jade when they know it is in our hands?” Jun Wu Xie had wanted to have an upper hand in dealing the first strike but had now changed her mind.

Not for any other reason, other than forging the dull shield that was Mo Qian Yuan, into a sharper shield.

His lukewarm temperament, needs a little stoking.

The Jun Family will in the future face other enemies and problems, and Jun Wu Xie did not want to be faced with having to deal with Mo Qian Yuan’s benevolent heart all the time. To prevent future recurring nightmares, she chose to put Mo Qian Yuan through the mill.

Once he saw the cruelty and viciousness of the enemy, he would understand, a benevolent heart will only kill him.

“Tell the Qing Yun Clan tomorrow that the Jun Family’s half of the Soul Jade had been buried with our elders in the family and hope that they can give up on their quest.” As to what their reaction would be, would be beyond her control.

Mo Qian Yuan’s eyes showed a mixture of emotions. He had not expected Jun Wu Xie to give in to the Qing Yun Clan in the first place, and he somehow felt, that her intentions were not as simple as what he was told.

“Alright, I’ll give it a try.” Mo Qian Yuan sighed.

Jiang Chen Qing was not an easy person to deal with, but Qin Yu Yan looked like a very understanding person.

While they talked, the guards brought the Soul Jade and presented it to Mo Qian Yuan who handed it over to Jun Wu Xie.

The other half of the Soul Calming Jade laid within a brocade box, and after Jun Wu Xie inspected it, she closed the cover and kept it securely.

Mo Qian Yuan had seen the Soul Jade before, and had not thought of it as anything important. He would not have expected that a tiny piece of the Soul Jade would make Jun Wu Xie stand against the Qing Yun Clan. He did not want to probe further as he trusted that no matter what Jun Wu Xie did, she had her own good reasons for it.

With what she came for in her hands, and the wager set, Jun Wu Xie had not much more to say. She turned to leave the chambers and Jun Wu Yao followed, where they subsequently disappeared.

Outside Mo Qian Yuan's living chambers, Jun Wu Xie looked into the starry sky, and turned to Jun Wu Yao who had followed behind her. Jun Wu Yao smiled and smoothly wrapped his arm around Jun Wu Xie. With a leap, they soared into the sky once again.

The guards outside the chambers, stared dumbfounded at the soaring figures flying through the sky and gaped in wonder.

Under the starry night, the cold wind rushed past them, the cold did not affect Jun Wu Yao in the slightest. The woman in his arms was always cold and unfeeling, but in his arms and pressed against his chest, was a warmth that spread throughout his entire being.

“Why was your time spent making a wager with that dummy?”

If you feel it's not worth keeping, just discard it.

“A sword needs to be honed before it becomes sharp, I am just putting it under the mill.” It might be the change in the way Jun Wu Xie saw Jun Wu Yao that made her share so much with him.

‘Sharp sword?’ Jun Wu Yao raised an eyebrow, not commenting further.

“Mo Qian Yuan is intelligent, things that the former Emperor had not taught him, I can teach him. The Kingdom of Qi needed an Emperor, I needed a legitimate heir to the throne who would owe the Jun Family a great debt of gratitude.” The path to being a great Emperor had no room for pure and complete benevolence. Mo Qian Yuan had been abandoned and despised by the former Emperor and had not had the chance to learn much. Jun Wu Xie did not mind, to coach and instruct him to become a competent Emperor.

“My little darling is especially nice to him.” Jun Wu Yao said with a laugh, but his eyes did not show the slightest bit of joy.

Chapter 207: “Wager (3)”

Nice? Jun Wu Xie thought to herself. She did not feel she had treated Mo Qian Yuan nice in any way.

They were just using each other to further their own ends.

“I dared to do this because you are here.” Jun Wu Xie raised her head to look at Jun Wu Yao. If Jun Wu Xie did not have the extraordinarily skilled Jun Wu Yao behind her, she would not have let go of the opportunity to land the first strike. But, faced with Jun Wu Yao, there was nothing the Qing Yun Clan could do to overcome him, she might as well make full use of the opportunity.

To make the fullest use of everything, was her way of doing things.

Jun Wu Yao was surprised, and glee filled his eyes.

What Jun Wu Xie had said, had greatly pleased the malicious killer who slaughtered without thought.

“Whatever you want, I’ll get it done.” Jun Wu Yao said laughing. It was for just a couple more days, he would allow those insignificant worms to live a little longer.

Jun Wu Xie blinked her eyes as she thought: ‘Sometimes, Jun Wu Yao spoils her more than Jun Xian does.’

This big brother of hers, wasn’t bad at all.

“Open your mouth.” Jun Wu Xie said suddenly.

Jun Wu Yao opened his mouth wide without hesitation, and the next moment, a slightly sweet elixir was dropped into his mouth and it went down his throat. A sweet fragrance lingered in his mouth and a warmth spread throughout his body. His veins and arteries absorbed the nourishment from the warmth and he felt lighter and comforted.

Jun Wu Yao’s smile widened and he did not know what Jun Wu

Xie fed him.

These elixirs were made by Jun Wu Xie's own hands and only the Jun Family father and son had had the luxury to have tasted them. And Jun Wu Xie had fed one to him today.....

This night, was the most wonderful night to him, since he was freed from those chains.

When they got back to the Lin Palace, the night was already deathly quiet. Jun Wu Yao carried Jun Wu Xie and his foot had just touched the ground in Jun Wu Xie's courtyard when she smelled the thick intoxicating aroma of wine.

That alluring aroma swirled within the courtyard, and the smell made one crave for more.

"It smells of Jade Nectar?" Jun Wu Xie wrinkled her nose. That was an all too familiar smell, encountered daily in her cultivation of the Snow Lotus, but never had it been so strong.

Before Jun Wu Xie could figure out what had happened, a sudden roar sounded from inside the room!

[You wretched brat! Let me go!] The little black cat meowed and roared from inside the room and a chaos of bangs and clatter sounded again!

Jun Wu Yao was curious and followed a dark faced Jun Wu Xie as she stormed into the room.

A handsome youth, his face flushed red, drunkenly straddled upon the black beast, his bare feet planted upon the cold floor, his fair skin in deep contrast to the sleek black fur on the beast.

The ferocious black beast, having the youth upon his back, scratched incessantly at the floor, attempting to throw the wretch off.

The slender weak looking youth had instead seemed to weigh a ton, sitting firmly atop the black beast, a wine jar in his left hand,

the mouth upon his red flushed face laughing evilly

“Move! Come on! Move! Why don’t you hit me like you always do? Try It!” Drunk Lotus’s mouth curled up at the corners, his slender legs held the black beast flanks in an iron grip, holding it firmly on the ground. His slender graceful body arched back slightly, and with his free hand, scooped up the black beast’s tail that was swishing about furiously, and gripped it tightly. The tail pulled back fiercely in his palm and Drunk Lotus twisted it and gave it a sharp tug.

“MEOWWWW!!!” The black beast gave out a ear piercing roar.

Chapter 208: "Fighting Lotus (1)"

A storm brewed within Jun Wu Xie's eyes, as she looked at the entangled flower and beast. Her chilling gaze swung to the wine cabinet in the corner of the room, where jars and jars of Jade Nectar had fully filled it after she had carefully sorted and arranged them previously. It was now all in a mess, as empty jars lay on their sides haphazardly in the cabinet, and many more jars lay broken on the ground, scattered all over, the incredibly precious Jade Nectar spilled. No wonder the smell hung so strongly in the air!

The sight before her made her eyes turn bitingly cold, and they narrowed menacingly.

"Separate them." Jun Wu Xie said softly.

Jun Wu Yao knew that she was speaking to him and without a word, he swept into the 'battlefield', as his long arms reached for Drunk Lotus.

Drunk Lotus who had been focused on his personal vengeance, had not even noticed Jun Wu Xie's return till Jun Wu Yao neared as he raised his head in astonishment.

Alas, he realised it too late.

The moment Drunk Lotus raised his head, Jun Wu Yao had had his hands clamped on his shoulders. Those immensely strong hands held him in a grip so tight that he felt as if the bones in his shoulders were about to break.

"Damn it!" Drunk Lotus cursed, he twisted his agile body and countered, gripping Jun Wu Yao at the elbows, and planting his legs firmly under him, he pushed up sharply!

Jun Wu Yao stood standing, an immovable mountain, as he raised an eyebrow at the drunken handsome youth.

"That was a rather good move, but, used on a rather wrong

opponent.” Jun Wu Yao’s mouth curled in a smile and the hands holding Drunk Lotus’s shoulders twisted and agony showed in Drunk Lotus’s eyes as he felt his strength seep out from him.

The black beast leaped up in retaliation at his newfound freedom, but was grabbed by its neck and lifted easily. It turned in rage to face.....

A pair of violet eyes, and those eyes dispersed completely all the battle fervour that had raged within it and it hung limp in that huge hand.

“Had enough?” Jun Wu Xie asked calmly, arms crossed. She was expressionless as she stared at the two ruffians that hung from each of Jun Wu Yao’s hands.

How long had she been gone?

The black beast and Drunk Lotus turned meek the moment they saw Jun Wu Xie.

The biting cold from her eyes were felt by the pair who hung their heads, as those eyes swept across the two guilty faces. The chilly eyes fell on the black furry face first, then it swung to the young and mesmerizingly handsome one, before it swung back.

“Speak!” That voice froze their hearts in that instant.

The black beast squealed

[Mistress! The moment you left, that petty thief stole your precious wine! I was trying to stop him! He then transformed and had the cheek to hit me.....]

This was the black beast’s second encounter with Drunk Lotus. The first time, they had not fought as Jun Wu Xie had been present. Their second encounter this day started the moment Jun Wu Xie had put her foot forward to leave and Little Lotus’s gluttony had taken over and he tottered to the wine cabinet. The moment he got his tiny grubby hands on the jars, he gulped down the Jade Nectar copiously. Little black cat had found out and tried

to stop him at once. Little Lotus got drunk and transformed into the dashing Drunk Lotus who ignored the little black cat's pleas and poured jar after jar of Jade Nectar into his mouth.

Helpless, little black cat transformed into his blast beast form and took on Drunk Lotus.

Alas, the intention was noble, the ending..... tragic.

He had pounced gallantly and valiantly, but the skinny malnourished youth's single punch had felled it, and he had sat on its back the whole night. The black beast was feeling rather aggrieved about the whole thing!

Even the Golden Lion had been devoured, but faced with the puny stick thin and shameless flower, he had been humiliated and helpless..... It didn't make any sense!

A million ways to punish them went through the mind of Jun Wu Xie, but after hearing little black cat relate the night's events, she grew solemn, and the anger disappeared from her eyes. Deep in thought, she walked to stand before Drunk Lotus.

Chapter 209: "Combat Lotus (2)"

Jun Wu Xie knew very well how strong the little black cat was after transformation, and especially after it had devoured the Golden Lion, its power had grown further. However, Drunk Lotus had been able to suppress and rendered the black beast helpless.

Jun Wu Xie had always thought that Little Lotus would be useful in other ways and his fighting prowess was even below the mistress herself, but through Drunk Lotus's actions today, it might be time to reassess that.

"You can fight?" Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes at the red faced Drunk Lotus.

Drunk Lotus who had been arrogant and egotistical with the black beast and grown subdued and meek as a mouse in front of Jun Wu Xie. He replied softly: "I can fight the cat easily."

"The contrast before and after is enormous." Jun Wu Xie stated.

Little Lotus and Drunk Lotus had an immense contrast in their personalities, and fighting prowess.

"Snow Lotuses thrive on fine wine naturally, and without the nourishment of wine, my powers cannot manifest." Drunk Lotus said sullenly. If not for that, he would not have been bullied all this time by that dastardly cat to such extents!

"He speaks the truth." Jun Wu Yao said suddenly. He saw the interest his little devil was showing in Drunk Lotus and explained graciously: "Snow Lotuses are supposed to look like this, the more fine wine they consume, they stronger they become. They are born with an insatiable thirst for wine, your little bumbling lotus's theft of the wine did not come about by accident."

Jun Wu Xie nodded. If that was so, her contracted ring spirit was not as useless as she had assumed.

But.....

That was no excuse for Drunk Lotus to wreck and waste all these Jade Nectar!

Jun Wu Xie raised her hand and held Drunk Lotus's chin, as she said through narrowed eyes: "If you need a drink, fine. But the wine here are off limits to you."

Drunk Lotus gaped like a goldfish under the steely stare of those eyes and was unable to utter a single word, before he nodded, resigned.

Jun Wu Xie was satisfied and let go of his chin. She had been vexed with her lack of prowess in battle, and although the little black cat made up for it in a way, she had not been satisfied. If Drunk Lotus could add on to her arsenal of strong fighters, he won't be a shabby addition at all.

"How strong is he?" Jun Wu Xie asked of Jun Wu Yao.

Jun Wu Yao replied: "That depends on how much he drinks, and what he drinks. If he is provided with enough fine wine, he should not have to break a sweat battling anything beneath a purple level spirit." Drunk Lotus's strength was beneath Jun Wu Yao's notice but his little devil had looked very satisfied.

Throughout the world, the blue spirit had been their limit. In the past century, not a single purple spirit was achieved. Drunk Lotus's fighting prowess, was the topmost and the finest fighter in Qi!

"The wine you gave me before, do you have anymore?" Jun Wu Xie asked looking at Jun Wu Yao.

Jun Wu Yao smiled, the little devil was stingy with her feelings, but she wasn't the least bit shy with her demands for wine. She could not bear to part with the Jade Nectar and had shifted her attention to his Jade Moon.

"As long as you wish for it, I will bring you all that you need."

"You can put them down." Jun Wu Xie said.

With her permission, the black beast and Drunk Lotus regained their freedom. With Jun Wu Xie here, the two troublemakers stayed unusually silent.

“If you need to quench your thirst in future, get it from him.” Jun Wu Xie told Drunk Lotus.

Drunk Lotus stole a glance at Jun Wu Yao, and his heart filled with dread.

He could not defeat this man!

He was too vicious, it was lucky he was a spirit and not human. A human would have lost his arms if he did not die with that death grip he had held him down with.

His Mistress asked him to get his fix from such a terrifying man!?

Drunk Lotus suddenly realised, the days ahead of him were going to be long and hard.....

Chapter 210: “Coercion (1)”

Early the next morning, without waiting for the morning court to commence, the Qing Yun Clan forced their way into the Imperial Palace’s main hall.

Mo Qian Yuan had just sat down upon the throne facing his officials and generals when the Qing Yun Clan’s domineering entrance scared them into retreating back out of the main hall and Mo Qian Yuan’s face darkened.

“Where is the Soul Jade?” Jiang Chen Qing had not noticed that their overbearing actions had trampled Mo Qian Yuan’s position as the Emperor into dust, when they burst in without announcements or notice, and scattered the various officials and generals before standing in the middle of the hall making their demands.

It might not have escaped his notice, but he just did not care to extend any pleasantries to the ruler of such a tiny speck of a kingdom.

Mo Qian Yuan suppressed the discontent rising within and said smilingly: “You are very early. Men! Provide seats for our distinguished guests.”

A group of eunuchs brought chairs in and the Qing Yun Clan delegation sat down.

“We’ll put aside Yun Xian’s folly for the moment, but I would like to reiterate that the deal agreed between the former Emperor and the Qing Yun Clan still stands and we don’t mean to create a disturbance in Qi, but we would ask Your Majesty to speedily hand over the Soul Jade over to us, and we can return to Qing Yun Clan with the completion of our mission.” Jiang Chen Qing went straight to the point. He might have used polite words, but his tone and demeanor had shown not the slightest sign of deferment.

Even the good natured Mo Qian Yuan was driven to anger but faced with the might of the Qing Yun Clan, he swallowed it and maintained his composure.

At that moment, he hated himself for not agreeing to Jun Wu Xie's suggestion to kill off these arrogant scoundrels, instead of seeing them strut and bluster here now.

"Ahh, you came here for that, I had agreed to it yesterday and I had naturally commanded my people to retrieve the Soul Jade throughout the night. But they were met with a problem." Mo Qian Yuan had thought out his script last night just for this.

"Problem? What problem?" Jiang Chen Qing's face had darkened immediately.

If Bai Yun Xian had not sent such a preposterous message, they would not have mobilised such heavy resources for this.

As a respected and revered Elder in Qing Yun Clan, the tiny Kingdom of Qi was beneath his notice. Having been made to come here, he just wanted to leave as soon as he could.

"The Soul Jade is indeed in the kingdom, and as you must have known, our founding forefathers broke it in two and bestowed one half to the Lin Palace's Jun Qing and kept the other half in the Imperial Palace. Ten years ago, Jun Xian's eldest, was killed in battle and the grieving Jun Xian buried his half of the Soul Jade with his son, Jun Gu. And as for the other half, it had been sealed together with the former Emperor in the Royal Tomb after he succumbed to his illness....." Mo Qian Yuan narrated unhurriedly. The former Emperor was still locked up in the dungeon but his death had been announced to the people. The former Emperor's tomb was just a facade and the one that was buried in there was the body of a death convict.

This fact was known only to two people. Mo Qian Yuan and Jun Wu Xie alone.

While Mo Qian Yuan had related his prepared speech, his eyes had swung towards Qin Yu Yan. He did not expect anything to change from the arrogant Jiang Chen Qing, but he had harboured a little hope for the learned and cultured Eldest Miss, to respect the sanctity of the dead's eternal rest, and give up on their quest.

However, when Mo Qian Yuan finished, Jiang Chen Qing face had grown thunderously dark. He stood up staring at Mo Qian Yuan and exclaimed: "What nonsense! How can you bury the Soul Jade!? Such ignorance! Retrieve the two halves of the Soul Jade right now! I don't care if you dig up the graves or unseal the tombs, this time, I want the Soul Jade in my hand!"

There was no room for negotiation, Jiang Chen Qing's first demand was to have Mo Qian Yuan and the Jun Family to desecrate the graves!

Chapter 211: “Coercion (2)”

Qin Yu Yan had been silent all this while, she had sat quietly in her seat, her face masked with a gentle smile.

Upon hearing Jiang Chen Qing’s words, Mo Qian Yuan face grew grave as he hastily said: “That..... doesn’t sound like a good idea. As our forefathers lie in their eternal resting place, and we go unseal them, that is rather.....”

“Dead people are invalids, Your Majesty need not be so concerned.” Qin Yu Yan said softly. “The former Emperor and Jun Gu are already dead and are no longer of concern to the world. Why should Your Majesty put the whole Kingdom of Qi at risk for the sake of two dead men?”

Mo Qian Yuan was stunned as he looked at Qin Yu Yan. He could not believe what he had just heard.

Put the whole Kingdom of Qi at risk?

That was obviously a threat!

Mo Qian Yuan did not expect that the seemingly gentle Qin Yu Yan spewed venom more viciously than Jiang Chen Qing.

Without giving room for negotiation, she had thrown an ultimatum.

Hand over the Soul Jade and they will leave. If they refused to hand it over, they will not spare Qi.....

Mo Qian Yuan finally realized how naive he had been. He had expected the leader of the Qing Yun Clan delegation to be easier to deal with?

Look at Jiang Chen Qing, and look at Bai Yun Xian. They were all from the Qing Yun Clan and which one of them was easygoing?

Mo Qian Yuan remembered Bai Yun Xian’s attempt to obliterate the whole Imperial City with her poison, and that poison had come

from none other than the Qing Yun Clan.....

“If Your Majesty feels uncomfortable doing it, we can do it on your behalf.” Qin Yu Yan did not wait for Mo Qian Yuan’s reply and she stood up and turned to Jiang Chen Qing. “Uncle Jiang, I will need to trouble you to bring them to the Royal Tomb and the Jun Family’s graveyard to retrieve the Soul Jade.”

“Hold on! Miss Qin, you.....” Qin Yu Yan interrupted before Mo Qian Yuan could continue.

“Your Majesty had better not try anything rash. I hope you will think for your Kingdom. You would not wish for your people to come to any harm I suppose?” Her gentle smile was still plastered upon her face, but the chill of the threat that was veiled under those words could clearly be felt.

Having said that, Qin Yu Yan left with the other Qing Yun Clan delegates.

After the Qing Yun Clan delegates had stepped out of the main hall, the various officials who stood outside shuffled back into the hall in trepidation. Upon seeing the dark expression on Mo Qian Yuan’s face, they clamped their mouths shut and did not dare ask anything about the morning’s intrusion.

Within the huge main hall, there was utter silence as Mo Qian Yuan sat on his throne staring blankly at the departing Qing Yun Clan delegates as his heart grew cold.

[I am keeping the Soul Jade at all costs, and will not release it to anyone. Aren’t you thinking that I want to kill them all off for no good reason and am being vicious and brutal? Then let’s see what the Qing Yun Clan will do when we refuse to hand over the Soul Jade when they know it is in our hands?] Jun Wu Xie’s words from last night resounded clearly in his mind now as he remembered how Jun Wu Xie’s eyes were so sure and completely confident.

Mo Qian Yuan had a sudden urge to laugh, Jun Wu Xie had

completely seen through the innate character of the Qing Yun Clan or she would not have made the wager with him.

It was himself that he found hilarious. He had been put through the abuse and persecution under the hands of the former Emperor and Mo Xuan Fei for such a long time, why did he still retain that ridiculous modicum bit of compassion?

Jun Wu Xie, it was his own stupidity and no one else was to blame.

In the eerily silent morning court session, a series of maniacal laughter suddenly broke out, and all the officials looked up in shock at the Emperor guffawing, unable to stop.

Chapter 212: “Coercion (3)”

After the Qing Yun Clan delegates left the main hall, Jiang Chen Qing wanted to quickly split them into two groups to retrieve the Soul Jade.

“How ridiculous is it? What was that little Emperor thinking? He thought he could still keep the Soul Jade!? Elder, do you think the Soul Jade was really buried together with their deceased family members?” The other Qing Yun Clan disciples could not hold back their grumbles and asked Jiang Chen Qing.

Jiang Chen Qing snorted in derision, “He dares? Qi is just a tiny insignificant kingdom, and if he has the audacity to deceive us, I will make him regret that he ever thought our Qing Yun Clan can be slighted like this.”

Qi was founded less than a century ago, their foundations were not strong and neither was their military might. Among the various powers, they were just a tiny kingdom. And the protection of their lands, was largely dependant on the Jun Family’s Rui Lin Army.

“The matter of the Jun Family’s Soul Jade having been buried with Jun Gu was previously mentioned by the former Emperor. It seems they do not know the true capabilities of the Soul Jade and buried it with their deceased.” Qin Yu Yan said softly.

She did not believe that Mo Qian Yuan possessed the guts to lie to them on the whereabouts of the Soul Jade.

“I had heard the Sovereign mention that, the former Emperor were not on good terms with the Jun Family. The former Emperor was worried that Jun Xian’s reputation with his merit in service overshadowed him, and he wanted to annihilate the whole Jun Family. He used the Soul Jade to enlist the help of the Qing Yun Clan to carry out the deed. I believe Mo Xuan Fei had the same intentions with his father, or Yun Xian would not have been won

over so completely in the short time she was here. I suppose they had wanted to make use of Yun Xian to foster closer ties with the Qing Yun Clan.” Jiang Chen Qing sneered.

The other disciples were interested to hear more and asked curiously: “Was the Emperor so dumb? If the Kingdom of Qi did not have the Rui Lin Army’s garrisons, it would have been swallowed up by the covetous eyes of the other powers. Eradicating the Jun Family, the protector of their kingdom, when the kingdom had just begun to stabilise and flourish, wasn’t that suicidal?”

For a tiny kingdom to even survive among greater powers, it was impossible without a strong defence force at least.

The Jun Family’s Rui Lin Army was the sharp blade that was pointed at their enemies, they pushed back invasions, and defended their soil.

The former Emperor of Qi had wanted to destroy this blade of theirs, that was pure suicide.

“The minds of the muddled, will not be understood. I have no interest how the Kingdom of Qi will turn out. The former Emperor is dead, the terms in our deal with Qi can be altered. The pills had been delivered and we only need to retrieve the Soul Jade. Whatever happens to Qi in the future, is of no concern to us.” Qin Yu Yan said smilingly.

“What Eldest Miss meant was, the little Emperor does not know that in our deal with the former Emperor, it included the protection of their kingdom by our Qing Yun Clan for twenty years against any external invasions and harassments.” Jiang Chen Qing explained, with a laugh.

Qin Yu Yan smiled, “Get the Soul Jade, and let’s have nothing to do with this place anymore.”

Qin Yu Yan’s words made them smile and they split into two

groups and headed towards their assigned destinations.

They Qing Yun Clan group had not noticed a tall handsome man carrying a petite young girl had been above their heads, who overheard every single word exchanged among them.

“Those were the people from the Qing Yun Clan?” Jun Wu Xie surveyed the backs of the figures as they grew smaller in the distance and her eyes grew cold. She had not been present at the main hall, but from their conversation that she overheard, she guessed that Mo Qian Yuan had not managed to squeeze out the tiniest gain from his encounter with those people.

“Those are just ants and are of no concern. When does my little darling want them dead?” The corners of Jun Wu Yao’s mouth curled up slightly. If the blood of those people can win him a smile from Jun Wu Xie, it should be an honour to them.

Chapter 213: “Breakthrough (1)”

Jun Wu Xie turned her head back. “No hurry, if Mo Qian Yuan was to be schooled, let him go through the whole course.”

Making the fullest use of resources available, she had no more time to spare coaching an Emperor.

Jun Wu Yao raised an eyebrow but did not comment further.

“Let’s go back.” Jun Wu Xie said, having seen the people from Qing Yun Clan’s demeanor, the peace in the Jun Family’s graveyard will be broken very soon.

She had made Mo Qian Yuan find a death row convict’s body to be placed in the Royal Tomb as a substitute for the former Emperor, hence, she wasn’t too worried that the Qing Yun Clan would discover that the former Emperor still lived.

Back at the Lin Palace, Jun Wu Xie acted like nothing had happened and continued busying herself with the lotus in the basin which had now bloomed. The intoxicating smell of the wine weaved with the fragrance of the lotus into an alluring aroma. Jun Wu Xie’s spirit power cultivation was achieved as easily as that. The spirit power within her was growing as it gradually filled her veins, arteries and blood vessels. She had noticed, in the past few days, that her spirit growth had shown some signs of halting and she had not made much in the way of progress.

“Are you breaking the level barrier?” Jun Wu Xie asked as she observed the gathering red spirit glow within her palm. She could control the release of her red spirit’s energy outside her body well now, but she had absolutely no idea how to battle with her spirit energy.

Jun Wu Yao was seated on a chair on the other side, his long legs crossed, his chin resting in his palm, quietly observing Jun Wu Xie’s serious face.

Ever since Jun Wu Xie had addressed him as ‘big brother’, their meetings had a significant change in its patterns. At least when Jun Wu Xie and Jun Wu Yao were under the same roof, there were no longer any outbursts of expulsion or retreats.

“Plant spirits require unique cultivation techniques. Although they progress rapidly, their level barriers are much more difficult to breach.” Jun Wu Yao gently reminded his brash little devil.

Jun Wu Xie looked up, and she looked at Jun Wu Yao puzzled. She had felt her spirit level break for sometime now, but there had been no progress. She had even specially asked Jun Qing and Long Qi about it, thinking she had done it wrong somehow.

“Level barrier difficulties?”

For the average person, after they had spent years to train and develop, it was easy for them to breakthrough to the next level. They only need to achieve fulfilment of the spirit energy for the particular level and they would have a chance for a breakthrough. The difficulty for the breakthrough of the level barriers, increase exponentially as the levels go higher. But it was not too difficult to breakthrough the red level to ascend to level orange, unless that person was ill gifted in his innate talents, where their progress were halted.

When they claimed that one was ill gifted in innate talents, they meant that that person’s veins and arteries were unable to contain enough spirit power. A person’s resilience of their veins and arteries not only affected their speed of progress, it affected their accumulation of spirit energy.

The spirit energy within a person constantly develop and accumulate, the more innately talented one was, more spirit energy would developed and cultivated, and their veins and arteries would have more spirit energy to absorb. For those lacking in talents, the spirit energy grow at a slower pace, and their veins and arteries are unable to sustain the flow of spirit energies,

resulting in a portion of the spirit energy accumulated from their training and development to leak and evaporate out of their bodies, and cause a lack of adequate accumulation of spirit energy to achieve a breakthrough of the level barrier.

But Jun Wu Xie's body had undergone her own meticulous fortification and nurturing, and her veins and arteries were at peak conditions, and there was no remote possibility that they could not contain and carry the flow of spirit energy.

Jun Wu Yao raised his hand with a laugh and a black misty fog coalesced within his palm. He swung his hand down gently and the ball of fog flew towards Jun Wu Xie, and spread downwards from above her head.

Chapter 214: “Breakthrough (2)”

The black fog spread around Jun Wu Xie as it gradually thinned and disappeared. With the thin black fog’s dissipation, a red glow started to emanate from Jun Wu Xie’s body. The red glow came from inside her and under her fair skin, her veins, arteries and blood vessels were visible, as they pulsed with a red glow.

“The spirit power within you has reached it’s optimum within its boundaries. But the methods adopted to cultivate a plant spirit are unlike other contractual spirits. To achieve a breakthrough, it requires something else, besides spirit energy.” Jun Wu Yao said through narrowed eyes.

“What does it need?” Jun Wu Xie asked.

“Contractual spirit.”

“.....”

“Plant spirits’ spirit energies are like the growth of all living things, constant and endless. But it lacks the brute force required for a breakthrough of the level barrier. If you want a breakthrough, you will need to absorb other contractual spirits, and use its power to help you achieve it.” Jun Wu Yao explained.

Jun Wu Xie was stunned. “Me? Absorb spirits?”

His suggestion was just preposterous.

“Do you know why there was never a single plant contractual spirit here?”

“Why?” Jun Wu Xie was curious. Since she was reborn, she had not heard of another plant contractual spirit.

At least throughout her inherited memories, this world had only two types of contractual spirits. One was the weapon type contractual spirit, and the other type was the beast type contractual spirit. Little Lotus was the first and only plant spirit

that she knew of.

Jun Wu Yao laughed, and explained further: “Before contractual spirits and people establish a link, they choose a suitable contractual spirit based on their physique and their bodily constitution. Under the skies, people who can absorb the spirit energy of contractual spirits are few and far between and plant spirits almost never descend to the world. If an occasional one appears, his master would not know how to achieve a breakthrough to the next level and it becomes a useless spirit. There were also people who did not even realise the awakening of their spirits and lived through a mediocre life dragging their plant spirit along carelessly.”

He had omitted one fact, and that was.....

The skies he had mentioned, only comprised of the skies in the lower three realms that Jun Wu Xie inhabited in, and not the real vast skies that he knew of.

“But you are different, you have a duo spirit constitution. Your little black cat has the ability to devour contractual spirits, and you can too.” Jun Wu Yao stood up, and walked over to stand before Jun Wu Xie. As he uttered the last word of his statement, he pointed his finger at Jun Wu Xie’s forehead.

“If you want to breakthrough, then devour a contractual spirit.”

Jun Wu Xie tilted her head to look past the finger on her forehead and saw the handsome face of Jun Wu Yao as he gave her an enigmatic devilish smile.

He knew! He knew little black cat’s soul was fused with hers!

“The stronger the spirit you devour, the more it will help with your breakthrough to the next level. Do not squander this opportunity for your breakthrough, and it will bring you unexpected results.” Jun Wu Yao lowered his head and the finger pressed upon her forehead and slid slowly down her nose, till it

came to her tiny sharp chin. He hooked his finger under her chin and raised her head to look into her eyes before he said: “You don’t have to worry about it, as a big brother, I will prepare everything necessary for your first spirit level breakthrough. You will just have to absorb it and it will be done.”

The contractual spirit that plant spirits absorb the first time they achieve a breakthrough had enormous repercussions on the human masters. Jun Wu Yao did not want Jun Wu Xie to haphazardly pick a useless spirit to devour.

His little devil only deserved the very best!

“How do I absorb it?” Jun Wu Xie had no knowledge in this regard. Little black cat was the one who devoured the Golden Lion and not her. An absurd thing like absorbing a contractual spirit was already unheard of, needless to say of knowing how to carry it out.

“I will teach you.” Jun Wu Yao said as his mouth curled up at the corners. He saw the look of apprehension cross the face of Jun Wu Xie and he grew more amused.

Chapter 215: “Breakthrough (3)”

Looking at Jun Wu Xie’s expression of confusion, Jun Wu Yao could not bear but to pull her into his arms, his chest against her back and rested his chin on her head. Jun Wu Yao cupped Jun Wu Xie’s hands together and placed a palm sized crystal ball in them.

“I have already prepared the contractual ring spirit for you and placed it in there.” Jun Wu Yao said smiling.

Jun Wu Xie stared at the crystal ball in her hands, it was sparkling clear and you could see through it. Upon closer inspection, she noticed there was something more inside. A trail of light seemed to swirl within and the light seemed to be alive.

“That’s a contractual spirit within?” The ball’s surface will cold and hard and felt just like beautiful crystal, but different. She could not identify what material that was.

“It is called a Spirit Prison, it is used to confine spiritual bodies. Two hours after a contractual ring spirit’s master dies, they return to the spirit world. Capturing the contractual ring spirits has to be carried out within that time. Trap them within the Spirit Prison and they will not be able to escape.” Jun Wu Yao’s mind was not on the Spirit Prison, he had it prepared when he first discovered Little Lotus as he believed that his little darling will need it one day.

“What kind of a contractual ring spirit is in here?” Jun Wu Xie asked as she peered into the Spirit Prison. The swirling stream of light was another form of the spirit body when trapped, and its original form was not visible now.

“Soaring Serpent.” Jun Wu Yao replied through narrowed eyes. It was an ancient spiritual beast that was born at the beginning of time when the heavens and earth were created.

“Although completely absorbing the Soaring Serpent would be

difficult with your current powers, but the first contractual ring spirit that you absorb is of paramount importance. Do not worry, I will help you with the breakthrough. Remember, no matter how painful it becomes, you will have to persist and hold on. Once the absorption begins, you cannot give up on it or you will be engulfed by the spirit that you wanted to devour.” Making a red level spirit absorb such a powerful contractual ring spirit like the Soaring Serpent was risky, but Jun Wu Yao did not want any other alternatives.

For people with plant spirits, the first time they went through a spirit level breakthrough, the contractual ring spirit they absorb was fused into the spirit energy of the person. This was the most complete ring spirit that Jun Wu Xie could absorb and Jun Wu Yao did not want Jun Wu Xie to miss out on the opportunity.

The Soaring Serpent might be powerful, but its power would bring Jun Wu Xie’s future development to greater heights.

It was worth the risk.

With him around, his little darling will be fine.

“You, trust me?” Jun Wu Yao asked.

Jun Wu Xie nodded slightly and she realised she could not see Jun Wu Yao who was behind her and answered affirmatively.

“Yes.”

Jun Wu Yao was ecstatic. Jun Wu Xie who had lowered her walls towards him made him want to hold her tight in his arms all the more.

“Open the Spirit Prison.”

Jun Wu Xie followed Jun Wu Yao’s instructions and placed her hands on the top and bottom of the Spirit Prison and turn them in opposing directions at the same time. The perfectly seamless crystal sphere turned under her hands, and the struggling Soaring Serpent within found its only avenue of escape and pushed its

spirit out through the tiny crack.

“Do it now! Like you do daily with the Snow Lotus’s spirit energy, draw in the Soaring Serpent’s spirit into your body but do not be hasty. Slowly let its spirit meld into your veins and arteries, and refine it bit by bit.” Upon the release of the Soaring Serpent, Jun Wu Yao had immediately set up a powerful spirit barricade around him, to entrap and seal the escaping ring spirit within.

Jun Wu Xie closed her eyes, and began to draw in the soul of Soaring Serpent into her body.

When it began, Jun Wu Xie felt an exceedingly violent spirit, rampaging within her body!

Chapter 216: “Breakthrough (4)”

That was the spirit energy of an unfamiliar spirit, it was completely tyrannical, and filled with marauding destructive power. The moment Jun Wu Xie started to draw in the spirit, her mind had become chaotic and her nerves had felt like they were about to snap in the next moment!

Sweat beads formed on her body and her clothes were soon drenched.

Pain felt in the soul was indescribably tormenting, far worse than any physical pain ever felt.

Jun Wu Xie was never averse to pain, but the torment she was under, made her turn pale.

Physical pain could drive a person to a momentary faint, but the agony from the torture of the soul would never make one lose consciousness. When a person's soul is under torture, his consciousness would in fact be heightened. At that moment, Jun Wu Xie's senses were heightened and amplified so much that a gentle tap on her would have felt like a boulder that had smashed on her.

The petite body within his arms grew hot and the colour drained from her face. Jun Wu Yao did not do anything besides carefully cradling Jun Wu Xie within his embrace.

He knew very well, any touch on her now will only be harmful and agony to Jun Wu Xie.

Her soul was under merciless assault, Jun Wu Xie gritted her teeth in defiance. Most people might not have had the chance to experience this agonising torment throughout their lives, but she was no stranger to it.

When the little black cat's soul had merged with hers, she had experienced this indescribable agony.

She had been very young then. When she got off from the operating table, she had lost her human form. Now that she was once again feeling the familiar pain, there was no fear nor dread in her heart.

If she was not afraid of death, this was nothing.

Jun Wu Xie's defiant streak was stoked, she did not back down, and increased the speed to draw in the spirit.

Kill me if you can, if not, stay down and get devoured!

The Soaring Serpent's soul thrashed and bashed, refusing to be absorbed by a human. But the spirit barrier totally shut off all his avenues of escape, and under the man's guidance, he was gradually being drawn into the little human girl's body!

The Soaring Serpent launched a frenzied attack on Jun Wu Xie's soul. Humans had weaker souls and he believed that by destroying the little lass' soul, he would be able to escape!

But Jun Wu Xie's soul had turned out to be more resilient than it had thought. No matter how he attacked, her seemingly weak and tiny soul had not given in an inch, and had shown absolutely no sign of dissipation.

When Jun Wu Xie had fully drawn in the soul of the Soaring Serpent into her body, Jun Wu Xie's eyes remained shut.

Her consciousness had fallen together with her soul into an abyss of darkness.

She saw within the darkness, a huge fearsome beast.

It was as enormous as the massive dragons of legend. Its body was one of a snake, but was endowed with a pair of wings with hooked claws. Its wings were flapping, and it suspended the huge serpent as it hovered in mid air.

Since Jun Wu Xie's rebirth, among the bestial spirits she had seen, the Golden Lion had been the biggest. But with the Soaring

Serpent before her eyes, it's head alone was more massive than the Golden Lion itself! It's dominating presence spread as it flaunted its strength.

“Insolent human! You would attempt to devour my soul!?” The Soaring Serpent looked down from its elevated viewpoint, at the tiny Jun Wu Xie on the ground. Jun Wu Xie's soul was so tiny that a single fang in its mouth was bigger than her!

Jun Wu Xie raised her head, and looked at the tyrannical Soaring Serpent. In those shiny black eyes, was a sea of calm.

Chapter 217: “Breakthrough (5)”

Jun Wu Xie raised her head, and looked at the tyrannical Soaring Serpent. In those shiny black eyes, was a sea of calm.

Jun Wu Xie sat down and crossed her legs in meditation in the darkness, having no intention to combat the Soaring Serpent.

The Soaring Serpent’s arrogance flared, infuriated upon seeing the tiny human soul calmly sit before its majestic presence, seemingly unaffected when she should be cowering in fear.

“You! Aren’t you afraid that I’ll shred you to pieces?” The Soaring Serpent roared.

Jun Wu Xie opened her eyes, completely calm.

“You are in my body, how will you shred me up?”

The Soaring Serpent was stumped. This little lass, wasn’t she being a little too level headed?

It had not been aware of where it was now, but with Jun Wu Xie’s statement, it noticed a significant difference in the air that was different from before..... it was obviously now in the lower three realms!

Within the lower three realms, no contractual ring spirits had even gone beyond the seven levels, not to mention the appearance of one as mighty as it was. Should this human soul not have been frightened senseless and lose her sanity upon laying her eyes on it’s overwhelming presence?

Moreover, how did she know they were inside her body now?

“How do you know?” The Soaring Serpent was stupefied by Jun Wu Xie’s calm demeanor.

Jun Wu Xie had just closed her eyes again when the Soaring Serpent spoke. She opened them again and said impatiently: “You are not the first spirit to have entered, so do not create such a

ruckus.”

For anybody else, during their first time absorbing a spirit body, they would have been rather panic stricken, but such encounters to Jun Wu Xie, were not unfamiliar to her.

When the little black cat had fused with her, it had been just like now. This seemingly dark world, was a space within her soul. Her current appearance was just a figment evolved from her soul, just as the Soaring Serpent was. The first time she had come to this space, and saw little black cat for the first time, Jun Wu Xie had experienced the panic and helplessness, but this space had become one that she was familiar with now!

In this dark space within her soul, it was impossible for any unfamiliar souls to cause or inflict harm upon her. All she needed to do now, was to quiet down, and use this space to chip at and divide the Soaring Serpent’s soul bit by bit for its absorption.

The importance of experience!

It was a complete victory by Jun Wu Xie!

The Soaring Serpent stared at Jun Wu Xie sitting calmly on the ground, dumbstruck. It could feel its own soul gradually being digested bit by bit into this lightless space.

The Soaring Serpent lost its cool!

The great Soaring Serpent was to be devoured by a tiny insignificant little lass!?

“Wait! You can’t!” The Soaring Serpent pleaded, it did not want to be devoured!

If it was not for that terrifying man, it would not have sunk so low.....

Jun Wu Xie ignored the cries of the Soaring Serpent, and focused on breaking down the Soaring Serpent’s soul and patiently absorbing it little by little.

Upon being drawn in, the Soaring Serpent had lost any chance of escape. In here, it was only if Jun Wu Xie's soul backed down, that the Soaring Serpent could escape, if not, it could only accept the fate of being devoured.

Jun Wu Xie had lost track of time when she finally opened her eyes from her meditation. What met her eyes was not the endless darkness, but the familiar sight of her room.

A mischievous voice tinged with a hint of relief sounded from above her head suddenly. "I knew you could do it, and you would be fine." Having said that, Jun Wu Yao turned the petite figure within his arms around to face him.

Jun Wu Xie's face was beaded with crystal clear drops of perspiration. Her big round eyes were not fully opened, having not fully awakened. When she became aware of Jun Wu Yao in front of her, she straightened herself and subconsciously looked down at her palm, which emanated an orange glow of spiritual fire.

Chapter 218: “Breakthrough (6)”

The orange glow of her spirit energy, gathered into flames. Bright and radiant, the shade of orange reflected in Jun Wu Xie’s eyes, igniting a ripple of joy and surprise.

“I broke through.” She gasped softly.

“Yes you did, my darling.” Jun Wu Yao planted a light kiss on her forehead, happy to just lightly taste her joy.

His little darling had only recently changed her attitude towards him and he did not want to risk breaking the up beautiful atmosphere between them.

Jun Wu Xie had taken less time than he had expected, and it seemed the process of absorbing the Soaring Serpent had not brought her any difficulties.

He had his eye set on an amazing one!

Advancing from red to an orange spirit, Jun Wu Xie had taken a mere few months. She had shrank the years needed by an average person to such extents, which was absolutely unbelievable.

On the other hand, if Jun Wu Yao had not prepared in advance, Jun Wu Xie might not have achieved a breakthrough so easily.

“You have attained the orange level spirit, the spirit energy required for cultivation and development will increase in folds. You are still young, and there is no need to rush.” Jun Wu Yao raised his hand to smoothen her hair.

Jun Wu Xie nodded her head, the first Snow Lotus had already fully blossomed. After the Snow Lotus bloomed, the spiritual energy they provided decreased. Fortunately, in the past few months, Little Lotus had nurtured a few Snow Lotus seeds and she had enough to use for the moment.

According to the written records in the ancient book, if water

from the Heavenly Spring were to be used, the Snow Lotus needed only a month to bloom, which will overshadow the effects that Jade Nectar gave.

Having successfully achieved her breakthrough, Jun Wu Xie was in no hurry to continue with her development and cultivation. While she had absorbed the Soaring Serpent, three days had passed. And in these three days, the changes within the Imperial City had been devastating!

The Qing Yun Clan had disregarded the Imperial Family and had forcefully broken into the Royal Tomb and dug up Jun Gu's grave.

But no matter how they searched, they found no trace of the Soul Jade. They were about to blow the whole place up!

Jun Wu Xie had not even the time to freshen up before she heard a series of ear splitting explosions. She frowned and grabbed some clothes to cover her from the ravages of the past three days and strode immediately out the door.

“Little Black!”

The little black cat laid just outside the door and upon hearing its Mistress' call, it transformed into its black beast form and carried Jun Wu Xie upon its back and rushed towards the source of the explosions.

Jun Wu Yao walked out unhurriedly from the room, and his smile faded as he saw the hurried back of Jun Wu Xie.

Who were the insolent tiny insects that dared disrupt the rest of his little darling.....

His dark black eyes gradually tinged with a dangerous violet, and the air in the courtyard hung heavy and suffocating. A shadow who had been hidden in the shadows was stung by Jun Wu Yao's anger and appeared in a flurry, and knelt before him.

“My Lord!”

“Who was it?” Jun Wu Yao’s mouth was a cold hard line.

“It’s those guys from the Qing Yun Clan.”

“Good. They seem to enjoy toying with death, I shall show them how I play.” Jun Wu Yao’s laughter was chilling. A movement caught the corner of his eyes, and Jun Wu Yao turned his dark violet eyes upon the clambering Little Lotus by the lotus pond.

Little Lotus felt the vicious stare and a shock ran through his entire body. He was minding his own business cultivating within the lotus pond when Jun Wu Yao’s shock wave of anger had caused pains and aches all over his little body. He had transformed into human form to escape from here but it seemed like a Great Demon had his eye on him.

“Get me a jar of Jade Moon.” Jun Wu Yao stood staring at Little Lotus, as he commanded the shadow at his side.

Chapter 219: “Third Slap (1)”

Smoke filled the air outside of Lin Palace. A big group of the Rui Lin Army gathered in front of its gates, and facing them, were ten men from the Qing Yun Clan delegation.

“I say, let’s not waste time. Your weak attempt at resistance is futile, and I’ll advise you to hand over the Soul Jade peacefully and save yourself the pain and humiliation.” A disciple of the Qing Yun Clan turned his wrist around repeatedly, a pair of black half finger gloves covered his hands.

He looked towards the Rui Lin Army soldier whom he had flung to land before the Lin Palace’s gates with a single punch, contempt written across his face.

Behind him, there were three other disciples dressed in the Qing Yun Clan’s livery, and six others dressed in individually different attire who were obviously top exponents from allies of the Qing Yun Clan who accompanied them on this trip to Qi.

The terrified commoners huddled at the side. The chaos had been going on since yesterday when the Qing Yun Clan had suddenly attacked the Lin Palace. If the Rui Lin Army had not arrived in time, the Lin Palace might have fallen to these foreign intruders.

The Rui Lin Army soldiers who gathered in front of the Lin Palace had swelled, numbering in the hundreds, but the Rui Lin Army who had the advantage of numbers, were being systematically oppressed by the group from the Qing Yun Clan.

In just a short day, the Rui Lin Army wounded had gone beyond a hundred, while the Qing Yun Clan had suffered no losses.

At that moment, Jun Xian stood dark faced, surveying the chaos in front of him. They had crossed swords for a long period but only the four Qing Yun Clan disciples from the group had stepped up to fight. The other six had just watched from the sidelines.

The four who had fought, looked about thirty years of age, and they all had level green spirits and beyond.

Judging from quality of the exponents sent, it could be seen that the Qing Yun Clan had placed a rather high priority on retrieving the Soul Jade, as not a single one of them were easy pushovers.

“Father, let me do it.” He had been seated in the wheelchair, and kept up the pretense of being crippled. He could no longer hold down the anger boiling within. Throughout the day, he had been forced to witness soldiers from the Rui Lin Army, brothers in arms to him, wounded and oppressed by the people from the Qing Yun Clan. The knot that had twisted his insides had grown as he sat holding himself back, but now it threatened to explode in his rage.

The Qing Yun Clan was too much!

Jun Xian remained silent, his gaze on the men behind the Qing Yun Clan disciples.

Among the six, the youngest of them had lived beyond a half century, and a few of them looked older than Jun Xian himself. They had stood back, not because of their old age, but because the Qing Yun Clan’s disciples were able to handle the situation they faced and there was no need for their expertise.

Jun Xian was very certain, that among the six at the back, every single one of them was more than a match for him!

Jun Xian had a green leveled spirit, if he were to join forces with the Bone Corroding White Owl, they might be on equal standing with the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan, but.....

The other six, way outclassed Jun Qing by too much.

Jun Xian had held Jun Qing back all this time at a heart wrenching cost of his men in the Rui Lin Army as he had been very certain if he or Jun Qing had partaken in the fight, the other six men would not have stood idly by.

Based on his calculations, the weakest among them, must at least

have achieved lower spectrum of the level blue spirit. And once the move, he expected the Lin Palace to fall!

“What? Still not giving up?” The man wearing the black gloves arrogantly raised his chin. His gloves were his contractual ring spirit. With the boost from his ring spirit, he could take down a male lion with a single punch. Ordinary soldiers would not be able to stand up to single punch of his!

“The tiny Lin Palace, should not have arrogantly gone against the Qing Yun Clan, if you persists on your folly, we will bring our wrath upon you.” After a long day’s worth of skirmishes, the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan were getting impatient.

Chapter 220: “Third Slap (2)”

“Since they insist on doing this the hard way, let’s not waste time here. Capture the useless one first, I don’t believe Lin Palace would refuse to hand over the Soul Jade then.” Two of the Qing Yun Clan disciples discussed their plans openly, totally disregarding the presence of the furious Rui Lin Army soldiers and the Jun Family’s father and son.

The ‘useless one’ that they were referring to was none other than Jun Qing who was seated in the wheelchair.

Jun Qing’s eyes grew bloodshot red then, how he yearned to rush up to the two despicable scoundrels and have a glorious fight to the death!

They had not attempted to negotiate nor made any requests. The Qing Yun Clan had come to their gates and attacked without warning. Scattered in front of the gates, many soldiers still lay on the ground gravely injured. They had been hurt by the Qing Yun Clan’s merciless assault, their lives still hanging by a thread!

They had heard of the tyranny of the Qing Yun Clan, and having faced them personally today, the stories they heard of the topmost clan rang glaringly true!

“Do not push us too far!” The Rui Lin Army soldiers gripped their sabres in fury, standing protectively in front of Jun Xian and Jun Qing.

They might not be as strong in might as the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan. But their loyalty was not to be questioned!

“If you want to get to my lord, it will have to be over my dead body!” Long Qi stepped to the fore, alone, a cold gleam ran down his sword as he held it horizontally in front.

“Ha ha ha.” The Qing Yun Clan disciple laughed. His laughter was directed sneeringly at an opponent he deemed too weak to

stand up to him.

“You? You think you can stop us? If you come seeking death, we’ll grant you your wish. Rest assured, when you guys are dead, I will make sure to step on every one of your bodies, and drag your useless cripple of a lord to the ground, so he can grovel at my feet and plead for his life.”

His insulting tone was felt strongly, like a sharp knife had sliced across the hearts of every single one of the Rui Lin Army soldiers.

The one they had pledged loyalty and devotion to, cannot be subject to such humiliation!

Long Qi shot forward, with sword in hand, the gleam on the sword trailed like lightning that struck at the man who spewed those words that humiliated Jun Qing!

The disciple of the Qing Yun Clan did not back off, and faced Long Qi’s attack squarely. He held two cutlasses in his hands, a manifestation of his weapon spirit. At the moment Long Qi’s sword neared, he crouched down, to avoid the killing thrust, and his agile body flashed to at side, and a cutlass edge bore down towards Long Qi’s body!

In a moment, Long Qi was fully engaged in his fight with the man.

The other Qing Yun Clan disciples stood by and watched on. They were confident the fight will end the same way the previous bouts. It will end up in humiliation for the Rui Lin Army again.

Moments later, those smiles faded.

Long Qi braced himself for the attack of the two cutlasses. When both blades were stabbed into his left and right shoulders, he exerted his energies to expand his shoulder muscles to trap and lock down both cutlasses. Disregarding the staggering pain in his shoulders, and with a loud roar, he thrust his sword at the heart of his opponent!

“Damn!” The Qing Yun Clan disciple had never encountered an opponent who fought with such blatant disregard for his own life. In order to dodge, he released his hold on the weapons and as a result, Long Qi’s sword scored a hit on his opponent’s left arm.

Having fought tens of opponents, the Qing Yun Clan had not sustained a scratch. He stared at Long Qi, who had caused his blood to flow. The twin cutlasses had reverted to its insubstantial form when he released them and escaped from Long Qi’s entrapment. Now, the twin blades had returned and coalesced within his hands.

Long Qi straightened himself and stood where he was. Blood flowed from the wounds on his shoulders, but he did not bother about it. His heart stopping gaze, stared at the disciple of the Qing Yun Clan, daggers in his eyes.

Chapter 221: “Third Slap (3)”

“My next strike, will take your life.” Long Qi said with narrowed eyes, in provocation at the Qing Yun Clan disciple.

The man’s face darkened, unable to believe he was wounded by Long Qi.

“It’s time to stop playing games, we should not waste our time with these trash. We should accomplish the Eldest Miss’ orders first before we take out time to amuse ourselves with them.” Seeing his comrade wounded, another disciple of the Qing Yun Clan stepped up to interject.

They had spent quite some time fooling around, they did not have much more time to waste.

“Do not kill that miserable mongrel , I need him alive as a test subject for some drugs.....” The wounded disciple said in a low voice, and shot Long Qi a venomous look.

“As you wish.”

The next moment, the four disciples of the Qing Yun Clan rushed at Long Qi.

Suddenly, he found himself under the attack of four green leveled spirits and Long Qi could not even afford the time to breathe.

A shrill screech sounded from above them, the Bone Crushing White Owl swooped in from the gates of the Lin Palace, and a tall slender form trailed in its wake!

“Father, I can’t hold back anymore.” Jun Qing had said the moment he made his move.

Long Qi was like a brother to him, and that brother was fighting to protect him. It was impossible for him to watch on while his brother fought for him.

Jun Xian sighed, but a flame lit in his eyes.

“Let’s not hold back! Rui Lin Army to arms! Kill them all!” At Jun Xian’s roaring command, the Rui Lin Army soldiers rushed at the ten men of the Qing Yun Clan!

The battle among hundreds of men raged in seconds, and the six men who had watched on silently made their move!

Jun Xian’s fears had materialised, the six men might have been elderly, but their prowess and skills were above the four disciples! Five blue streaks of spiritual energies shot across the sky, and among them, a lone indigo streak stood out!

Just a level shy of the purple spirit, the mighty indigo spirit!

The moment the indigo light appeared, all Rui Lin Army soldiers felt an immense pressure upon them!

The might of the indigo spirit, caused all whose spirits were below green to have difficulty breathing. They were robbed of their ability to battle, and some could not even walk.

The indigo spirit glow emanated from head to toe on an elderly man with a greyish white beard. He held his hands behind his back and stood behind everyone, his wise eyes surveying the battle, his brow slightly furrowed.

The Qing Yun Clan had mobilized two indigo spirit exponents. One of them had gone with Jiang Chen Qing and Qin Yu Yan to the Imperial Palace to settle their scores with Mo Qian Yuan, and the other one stood before the gates of the Lin Palace!

Under the indigo spirit’s oppressive pressure, the Rui Lin Army soldiers were largely incapacitated. Only Long Qi, Jun Xian, Jun Qing and a few more struggled in defiance. But they faced four high leveled green spirits and five overwhelming blue spirits at the same time!

Things could not get any worse!

The Jun Family were in a very tough battle, big and small wounds started opening up all over their bodies. The heavy stench of blood pervaded the air, further stifling the resistance they put up.

Right at that moment, a ear splitting roar cracked through the air!

A massive black streak rushed out from the gates of the Lin Palace, and a tiny figure sat, perched high upon its back.

“Who dares harm my Grandfather and Uncle!!?” Her bitter cold voice shot right into the ears of the men still in the frenzy of battle, and they subconsciously turned to see the source of that voice.

They saw a majestic black beast, with a peerlessly beautiful girl perched upon it, and her eyes stood out, bitingly cold!

Chapter 222: “Third Slap (4)”

Jun Wu Xie’s frosty gaze surveyed the battlefield, her sight locked onto Jun Xian and Jun Qing and their wounds. An angry explosion went off in her mind.

She had intended to use the Qing Yun Clan’s arrogance as a lesson for Mo Qian Yuan to learn how to be an Emperor, and was prepared to have Jun Wu Yao lend a hand to end the conflict with the Qing Yun Clan. She had not expected for her spirit breakthrough to come just then, and in the time that she had been unconscious, the Qing Yun Clan had brought their assault right up to their doors!

Jun Wu Yao had been preoccupied, with protecting her throughout her spirit breakthrough, and had no knowledge that the Lin Palace had been under siege.

And upon seeing the blood stained figures of Jun Xian and Jun Qing, Jun Wu Xie had only one single thought on her mind!

She wanted all within the Qing Yun Clan to die by a thousand cuts, and not a single one was to be spared!

The young girl and the black beast’s sudden appearance had surprised the people of the Qing Yun Clan, and when they saw the youthful appearance of Jun Wu Xie, they heaved a sigh of relief.

It was just a lass that looked barely fifteen. Even Jun Xian and Jun Qing were wounded by them, what could the tiny young girl do to them?

Among the aggressors, only the exponent with the indigo spirit remained wary of Jun Wu Xie’s sudden appearance.

He had released his oppressive pressure on the battlefield, and all with spirits below the green level should be greatly affected by it. But this little girl had maintained her cold gaze and did not seem to be affected in the least. What baffled him further was that he

was not able to ascertain the level of the jet black beast contractual ring spirit whom she rode upon.

The indigo leveled exponent frowned in thought, with his powers, he was able to determine Jun Wu Xie's spirit level with one glance, but what he saw, shocked him more.

The little girl, at such a tender younger age, had achieved a level orange spirit!?

With her age, her spirit must have just awakened, and within such a ridiculously short period of time, she had broken through from her red spirit to orange!? That was absolutely incredible!

A fourteen year old who broke through to attain an orange spirit, and withstood his spirit's oppressive pressure completely. He looked at her in awe and disbelief.

“Little Black.” Jun Wu Xie called chillingly.

“Kill!”

At the drop of her command, Jun Wu Xie had jumped off the black beast. She might have just attained her orange spirit. But the sight of her family members wounded drove her hatred for the attackers uncontrollably forward.

The massive black beast roared as it leapt towards the Qing Yun Clan disciples. Its first target was one Qing Yun Clan disciple who was currently tangled with Jun Xian.

The man saw the black beast as the young Jun Wu Xie's contractual ring spirit, and had not paid much attention to it. But at the moment the black beast pounced on him, he was stunned!

How was it so fast!?

Before he could react, as he realised he had completely underestimated the beast, his neck was broken off with a crunch in a single bite!

“ROAR ! ! !” The black beast swung its head and threw the head

in its jaws into the air.

The dismembered head sailed in a smooth arc through the air as the blood flow trailed in its wake. The fresh warm blood splattered on the other Qing Yun Clan disciples.

It had happened too fast, and they did not expect, that a ring spirit that possessed an unascertained level was capable of such speeds in its attacks!

“Today, none of you will leave alive.” Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes and released her newly attained orange spirit to its fullest extent.

Chapter 223: “Third Slap (5)”

The orange spirit energy emanated from her body and spread out bathing her in a halo of light. The nine men of the Qing Yun Clan looked at Jun Wu Xie, shocked.

An orange level spirit user, was able to release her spirit energy to such an extent!?

Impossible!

The girl before them, had just a mere orange spirit. She was weaker than Jun Xian and many others. But for some unknown reason, when those bitingly cold eyes lock on you, you felt as if you had fallen into the depths of fiery hell.

An orange spirit that stretched its boundaries, a ring spirit of unascertained level, the combination was tad bit too much to believe.

Engaged in battle, Jun Qing stole a few glances at Jun Wu Xie, he distinctly remembered that Jun Wu Xie’s contractual ring spirit had awoken merely months before, and she had already broken through to the orange level!?

The incredulous speed of her breakthrough had shocked Jun Qing as well!

Jun Wu Xie readied to make her move and had stepped towards the Qing Yun Clan disciples, when a white flash streaked past from behind.

“Leave the small fry to me, my Mistress. You should not dirty your hands.” The youth’s crisply clean voice reached Jun Wu Xie’s ears, and the breeze brought a scent of fragrant wine wafting over, lingering under Jun Wu Xie’s small pointed nose.

Jun Wu Xie stopped in her tracks, and stared after the white figure as he streaked into the chaos.

Drunk Lotus!

The youth's white flowy robes fanned out behind the handsome face that had been blessed with sharp features, his cheeks glowed, suspiciously pink, as he jumped right into the thick of battle. Where he passed, a hurricane seemed to trail. Many of them who were under attack, Jun Xian included, suddenly felt a brute force tug at their sleeves and before they knew it, they were flung out of the battlefield!

In moments, Long Qi and his comrades who had been surrounded found themselves flying through the air as well, having been thrown from the battlefield.

A lone youth dressed fully in white, stood within the circle formed by the people from the Qing Yun Clan. His loose robe was slightly open and it showed his clear and fair skin underneath. His slightly raised shoulder, propped up the his hand across his chest, and an intricate wine jar was held loosely in his fingers.

Drunk Lotus stepped upon the wet ground, his feet bare. The sticky blood had been smeared all over them. He raised his eyes, and his anger rose as he stared at the men from the Qing Yun Clan.

“Grandfather! Uncle!” When the Jun Family father and son had been thrown, Jun Wu Xie had extended her her spiritual energy and held them, and gently set them on the ground.

“Wu Xie, who is that youth?” Jun Qing was supporting Jun Xian, as they looked at the surrounded Drunk Lotus. He had not even noticed anyone approach before he suddenly found himself flung into the air earlier. Looking upon the battlefield now, it must have been the work of that youth.

“That is Drunk Lotus.” Jun Wu Xie replied offhandedly, her face in a frown as she surveyed the father and son bodies, only after she did not find any mortal wounds, did she heaved a sigh of relief. But her anger was ignited and stoked as the sight of their blood stained clothes and numerous more smaller wounds were located, her

anger raged into a scorching inferno!

Jun Wu Xie turned to Drunk Lotus and the black beast on the battlefield and threw out her command in a chilly voice.

“Spare not a single one.”

They dared wound Jun Xian and Jun Qing!? They shall pay with their blood!

“Yes! Miss!” A sinister smile curled up from the corners of Drunk Lotus’ mouth. He reveled in the effects of the wine as he delved into a maniacal frenzy!

“Who are you!?” The youth had suddenly interrupted their fight and messed up their momentum. The Qing Yun Clan disciples were furious as they stared at the youth with unveiled malevolence.

First, it had been the lightning quick black beast, and next came the sudden appearance of this youth, with the series of unexpected occurrences, they were getting cagey.

If they were to say the black beast was too quick, they could at least see it. But when did this youth get here?

None of them had noticed!

Even the indigo spirit user, only noticed the additional presence of a handsome young youth after Drunk Lotus had stopped and stood still.

Drunk Lotus swept his eyes over the men around him and swung the wine jar to his mouth. He took a mighty swig and wiped the back of his hand across his mouth, before he coldly exclaimed: “Remember this. Today, the one to send you all to hell, will be this Lord Drunk Lotus!!

Chapter 224: “Third Slap (6)”

“Brag while you can! You don’t know who you are up against kid.....” The Qing Yun Clan disciples taunted at Drunk Lotus. They didn’t know from where and from when the arrogant little scoundrel had appeared from all out of a sudden.

Drunk Lotus raised an eyebrow at the man who spoke, and with a twisted smile, his snow white clothes billowed out, and a white torrential hurricane blew as Drunk Lotus shot towards him.

The man stood stunned, unable to see Drunk Lotus at all!

His speed..... was even faster than that black beast!

The white flash appeared in front of the man, Drunk Lotus’ face was devastatingly drunk, and he raised a fist and swung at the man!

The Qing Yun Clan disciple smiled in glee as he saw Drunk Lotus’ attack was a simple punch, and he gathered all his spiritual energy onto the gloves covering his fists. Throughout the skirmishes in the past one day, his weapon series ring spirit which manifested itself as combat gloves had defeated countless full grown men of the Rui Lin Army, he thought he did not have to worry about his current opponent as he was just a skinny weak boy!

Extremely confident, the man threw his most explosive punch, right into the fist of Drunk Lotus’!

At that moment, the ear piercing sound of shattering bones cracked through the air, the black gloved hand, had upon contact with Drunk Lotus’ clear pale fist, shattered under the crushing force and warped grotesquely and the shattering of bones inched on as Drunk Lotus’ fist continued on its path!

Alas, that was not the end. Drunk Lotus’ smile grew more twisted and pushed further into his punch. The dominating brute force shattered his fingers and broke the whole hand

The sharp cracking of bones pierced through the air. Drunk Lotus' single punch had pushed the bones of his opponent's forearm backwards, to pierce out through the elbow!

The whites of the bones stuck out awkwardly, and looked totally out of place. Blood flowed down the bone and pooled on the ground.

"Tsk, that's all you have?" Drunk Lotus jutted out his chin at the man howling in pain, as his mouth tsked in disdain.

The black beast who was engaged with another Qing Yun Clan disciple had seen the man's hand shatter and contempt showed on its furry face.

Even it was unable to withstand a punch from Drunk Lotus, and these men naively think they can?

"ARGHHHHH !!" The Qing Yun Clan disciple lay in a pool of his own blood, losing all signs of his prior haughtiness and arrogance. His face pale, he lay trembling uncontrollable on the ground, howling endlessly.

His nightmare wasn't about to end and the white clothed youth squatted down next to the man howling and stared irritably at the disciple. Drunk Lotus' eyes were red and bloodshot from the wine and he held his fists up before he rained a flurry of punches upon the man.

Every punch, broke his bones and ripped open his flesh!

Fresh red blood splattered with his every punch, and they stained his clothes red. Warm blood flowed down his face, giving a devilish look to the handsome face.

In a blink of an eye, a living man, had under the fists of Drunk Lotus, been pounded to mash, and not a single bone in him was intact.

That gory scene, drove the Qing Yun Clan disciples to nausea, and even Jun Xian, who had seen countless deaths in his decades of

killing and slaughter on the battlefields paled at the sight. He turned to Jun Wu Xie, his face in shock, but found Jun Wu Xie's expression cold, her clear eyes frigid, and she did not seem to be disturbed in the least.

“Grandfather, they deserve it.” Jun Wu Xie seethed in anger. If she was strong enough, she would have broken their bones and scattered them as ashes herself.

Satisfied, Drunk Lotus stood up. The maniacal smile remained on his face as he cracked his knuckles. He stretched his neck and stared at the stupefied group from the Qing Yun Clan and his words made the men's skin crawl when he asked: “Next. Whose turn is it?”

Chapter 225: “Third Slap (7)”

Drunk Lotus’ words, had made the faces of the men from the Qing Yun Clan turn white as sheets. The disciple that was now a pile of mashed up flesh and bones on the ground might not have been their best fighter, but he had the most powerful fists among them. He had prided himself on his mighty fists but those very fists had been utterly crushed and his bones shattered by the youth with a single punch to them! They could not even imagine, just how incredibly strong the youth’s punches were!

All of them possessed at least a green leveled spirit and none of them dared to face up to those fists.

But, Jun Wu Xie’s command had been given. There was nowhere to hide, as Drunk Lotus would not allow that to happen!

Drunk Lotus had turned his eyes on another disciple of the Qing Yun Clan. A chill ran up his spine and he started screaming. “Kill him! Senior Wen! Make your move! NOW!!”

When that man shouted, the skilled indigo spirit user was feeling conflicted. He had no dealings with the Qing Yun Clan before this. He came here against his wishes as he had needed the help of the top clan throughout the lands. He had received an invitation to join the delegation to come to the Kingdom of Qi and had been forced to accept. Hence, when they had faced the Rui Lin Army soldiers, he had not lifted a finger, and only when they were rushed by the Jun Family’s father and son and the Rui Lin Army had he reluctantly made a move and only released his spirit’s oppressive aura to stop an all out attack from their opponents. He had resisted from making a move against the Lin Palace till the last moment, and it was not because he couldn’t, but because he wouldn’t.

For anyone to attain the indigo spirit, they were usually people who were extraordinary in their gift and character.

Having lived close to a century, he had seen and heard much of the world. The righteous reputation of the Jun Family had not escaped his ears either, although their might did not take one's breath away, their upright and noble integrity had him respect them a lot, and he was extremely reluctant to raise his hand against them.

If the Qing Yun Clan disciples were able to handle the situation on their own, he would just remain a bystander to their atrocities, but the tide had turned, and faced with the joint assault of the black beast and Drunk Lotus, two of the Qing Yun Clan disciples had been killed in a blink. The other invited expert exponents had had to move in and begin their attack on Drunk Lotus and the black beast, but based on the capabilities displayed by the youth and the beast, the answer was clear how this would end.

To make a move, or to refrain?

But, remembering the wounds of a member of his family back home, he sighed in resignation, and turned his eyes on to Jun Wu Xie.

He could see that the one who had command over the youth and the black beast, was this little girl standing in the distance.

“Hand over the Soul Jade and this will end here.” He said to Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie snorted coldly at him, and took a step forward: “You dare harm my family, and smear the Jun Family's name. This will not end that easily. Today, I proclaim the Qing Yun Clan as my enemies. Not only the Qing Yun Clan people in the Kingdom of Qi will die, soon I will show up myself at the doors of the Qing Yun Clan! And none in Qing Yun Clan will live!”

The indigo spirit user looked in surprise at Jun Wu Xie. He saw her chilly gaze, her determined dominance and could not believe he was seeing all this coming from a little girl! Her proclamation was a mountainous task to undertake, was it even possible!?

Take down the top clan under the skies? The little girl was being rather arrogant!

“Ignorant junior, do you know what you are up against?” The indigo spirit user asked gently.

Jun Wu Xie said coldly: “You should ask that of the Qing Yun Clan. Do they know who they are up against?”

Jun Wu Xie continued: “I saw that you had not made any moves against us. If you leave now, I’ll spare your life. But those who harmed my Grandfather and Uncle, shall leave their lives here.”

The indigo spirit user was taken aback. Not even in his dreams, had he expected that he would one day be threatened by a little girl who had just broken through to the orange level.

While he stood in astonishment, Drunk Lotus had obliterated and mashed up another disciple of the Qing Yun Clan to a pulp of flesh and bones into the ground!

Chapter 226: Only for a Gentleman (1)

That was when the indigo spirit user's face paled. Three of the Qing Yun Clan disciples had been slaughtered mercilessly before his eyes. The last remaining disciple was struggling under the black beast's lightning quick attacks. What was more frightening was that the white robed youth had already eyed Eunuch Wei, a blue spirit user. Drunk Lotus was not slowed down even against a blue spirit user, his attacks were as dominating and as tyrannical as when he had fought the green spirit users. Green or blue, it did not matter the slightest to Drunk Lotus!

Seeing the skills displayed by the youth, and the way he overwhelmed a blue spirit user, he was thinking maybe he himself with his indigo spirit might very well not be a match for him!

Where in the deepest levels of hell did this overpowered demon crawl out from!?

The indigo spirit user did not even classify Drunk Lotus as a contractual ring spirit.

In this world, only the weapons and beast type ring spirits were widely known. Who would have thought the handsome youth could actually belong to the plant based series of ring spirits? Moreover, Drunk Lotus was a plant based ring spirit that had the ability to morph into human form.

Based on Drunk Lotus' appearance, he would most probably be about seventeen years..... maybe eighteen. No release of spiritual energy was detected when he attacked, and it was impossible to even guess at the real strength behind that slender attractive figure of a boy.

Even under assault from several blue spirit users, he was handling the fight with ease. Was he an indigo spirit user as well?

Impossible!

Attaining the indigo level in his teens!? None exists!

“Wen Xin Han! What are you waiting for!? If we are to die, you would not be able to answer to the Qing Yun Clan! Don’t you want to save your granddaughter anymore!?” The several blue spirit users who were being pushed back by a lone Drunk Lotus grew desperate and shouted out to Wen Xin Han, the only indigo spirit user and the strongest among them. Never in their lives had they seen a teenager this powerful who forced five blue spirit users into throwing all their spiritual energies into defence, just to ward off his attacks.

The only indigo spirit user, Wen Xin Han, among them, still had not made a move.

“He is Wen Xin Han?” From behind, Jun Xian who had been tending to his wounds was shocked when he heard that name, and he looked wide eyed, at the conflicted expression on the expert blue leveled spirit exponent.

“Father, you know him?” Jun Qing asked in query.

Jun Xian frowned: “Yes, I know of him. He is from the Yan Kingdom, and he was widely revered as a prodigy who attained a breakthrough to the level yellow spirit when he was just twenty years old. His father was an official in the Yan Kingdom, but a massacre of his whole family was ordered in secret by the reigning Emperor. His whole family was killed and only he alone managed to escape. He disappeared from the face of the world thereafter, and I did not expect him to be still alive. The Wen Family were fiercely loyal to the crown, and in no way were they inferior to our Jun Family. I had heard much about the Wen Family when I was younger.”

When he finished relating the story of Wen Xin Han, Jun Xian turned to Jun Wu Xie: “Wu Xie, if possible, do not harm Wen Xin Han. He had not attacked us, and I think his sense of conscience is still sound. I believe in members of the Wen Family, they would

never be an accomplice to evildoers.”

In this battle, Wen Xin Han had not participated in the attacks. If the indigo spirit user had attacked, the Jun Family father and son would have been dead before Jun Wu Xie arrived.

Jun Wu Xie looked up at her grandfather. She had not been blind to Wen Xin Han’s internal conflict, but it was that it didn’t matter to her. If Wen Xin Han remained as a spectator, she would spare his life. If he continues to be party to the Qing Yun Clan’s evildoing, she would not let him off.

But Jun Xian had spoken, and she did not want to defy him.

If Grandfather wants her to stay her hand, she will comply.

Just when Wen Xin Han was about the jump into the fray, Jun Wu Xie said suddenly: “Senior Wen, since you were forced to dirty your hands only because of a desperate need for the help of the Qing Yun Clan, then allow me to offer you an alternative now.”

Wen Xin Han held himself back and looked at Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie raised her hand and threw out a bottle of elixirs to Wen Xin Han who caught it deftly.

“As long as the person you want to save is still alive, this medicine will let him live on. But if you choose to attack today, not only the person you want to save, but even you will die here.” Jun Wu Xie offered with her eyes narrowed.

Chapter 227: “Only for a Gentleman (2)”

Wen Xin Han looked at Jun Wu Xie in consternation and stared at the bottle in his hand.

What is this little girl saying?

He had seen Drunk Lotus in action, and Wen Xin Han was not completely confident to come out of a fight with him unscathed. He knew exactly what Jun Wu Xie had meant when she had said he will die here, and knew deep in his heart it was not just an empty threat.

And she had also said..... her elixir would save a life..... was that really the truth?

They saw that Wen Xin Han had been about to make his move when Jun Wu Xie's bottle of elixirs had confused him back into inaction. The aggressors turned helpless defenders under the overwhelming assault from Drunk Lotus and the black beast grew desperate.

“Wen Xin Han! Do not fall under the spell of that witch! Even the Qing Yun Clan Sovereign was not completely confident of treating your grandson, how capable can a little lass like her be? She's just dragging for time to kill us before she can consolidate her forces to take you on! Do not fall for her scheme!”

Wen Xin Han stood staring in wonder at Jun Wu Xie. He would not even have given it a thought if he had only considered her age, but something about her when he saw her calm and completely confident eyes clicked in his mind, and he felt a sense of unhurried certainty from her.

‘To fight with his life at stake, or leave cradling this last hope in his arms?’

‘If he were to die, his grandson would have no way to live either. He knew the callousness of the Qing Yun Clan too well, even if he

were to die here in battle today for their cause, they would not waste their time on his grandson whom they had no use for without his grandfather.'

'If that was the case, why should he risk his life?'

"Your name is Jun Wu Xie?" Wen Xin Han raised his head and looked at Jun Wu Xie.

"Yes."

"I'll remember you. I will not further involve myself here today. If this elixir really works, Wen Xin Han will henceforth owe you his life. But if you were to deceive me, I will do everything I can to bring down the Jun Family, even at the cost of these old bones." Wen Xin Han had decided to take a gamble, he was not confident of surviving a battle with Drunk Lotus, and if he died, his grandson would have no chance to live either.

'Accepting Jun Wu Xie suggestion was an alternative, it would be the best scenario if it could save his grandson. If it could not, he would make Jun Wu Xie pay in blood.'

"I don't want your life." Jun Wu Xie rejected coldly, and it answered the unspoken question in Wen Xin Han's mind.

Wen Xin Han suddenly roared in laughter, faced with such a confident and arrogant little girl, he couldn't find it in his heart to dislike her.

"Fine! If it works, I will make it my duty to protect the Jun Family till the day I die, how's that?"

"You think I can't protect it myself?"

'That arrogance!'

This was a first for Wen Xin Han. He had never come across a kid as unruly and rebellious as Jun Wu Xie was. If not for the wrong timing and circumstances, he would have liked to see, what this young girl who broke through to attain an orange spirit at such a

young age, was capable of.

“I have caused disturbance today, we’ll meet again” Wen Xin Han did not want to be associated with the Qing Yun Clan any further. If not for his grandson, whose life hung by a thread, he would not have agreed to partake in such acts of tyranny with the highly regarded Qing Yun Clan.

With those words, Wen Xin Han dispelled his spirit’s oppressive pressure and with a flick of his voluminous sleeves, he soared into the air, leaving the shouts and curses of the blue spirit users far behind.

“Is he really gone?” Jun Qing had watched the scene play out with incredulity, not understanding how Wen Xin Han had been so easily coaxed to leave with a few words from Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie explained: “Drunk Lotus’ strength was glaringly obvious, and he knew he would not escape unscathed. If he dies, the Qing Yun Clan will not save the person he wants to save. Rather than to work to the bone to do the Qing Yun Clan bidding, why not take a gamble.” It must be said, Jun Wu Xie had clearly read Wen Xin Han heart and mind, and cornered him into make the most logical choice.

For one who survived the Yan Kingdom’s Emperor’s deadly persecution till today, and managed to breakthrough to attain a rare indigo spirit, Jun Wu Xie had very good reason to believe, Wen Xin Han knew how to choose.

Chapter 228: “Only for a Gentleman (3)”

A Drunk Lotus who was powerful enough to cause consternation to the indigo spirit user, and Jun Wu Xie’s generous offer of a tempting alternative, had naturally made the strongest among the group, who did not like the Qing Yun Clan anyway, choose to leave.

With both might and strategy, Jun Wu Xie was bringing them down fast.

With the oppressive pressure lifted, the Rui Lin Army who had been rendered immobile rose back on their feet. They encircled the delegates of the Qing Yun Clan and forced them close into the range of the snapping jaws and mauling claws of the fearsome black beast, and the merciless tyrannical and unseen fists of the maniacal Drunk Lotus.

Drunk Lotus went on a terrifying rampage as he did not have to watch his back anymore.

In less than an hour, the four Qing Yun Clan disciples, and the five experts who joined the convoy were dead, pulverized and torn to shreds.

A glaringly red pool of blood on the ground surrounded Drunk Lotus’ feet, and his white clothes were now red. His exceedingly handsome face did not show any disgust or abhorrence, but it instead shone with the exhilaration of the gruesome massacre he had just executed!

“YEAHHH!” Drunk Lotus gave out a low roar of exhilaration as he held his blood smeared fists to his chest and clasped them hidden within his voluminous sleeves. With a light leap, his slender form drew a graceful arc and he landed right in front of Jun Wu Xie.

“Miss, all dead.” Drunk Lotus beamed at her.

Jun Wu Xie nodded slightly. The threat against the Lin Palace had been diffused, but it was far from over. Jun Wu Xie had the injured soldiers carried in to be tended to. As long as they were still breathing, she was confident of saving them.

Jun Xian and Jun Qing's injuries had not been serious, but Long Qi, who had three ribs broken, and sustained various wounds, had gritted his teeth and had been silent throughout the ordeal.

She then ordered for medicine to stabilize the condition of the wounded to be distributed but did not go back into the Lin Palace herself. She stood at the gates, staring at the bodies of the men of the Qing Yun Clan, her eyes chill as ever.

"Little darling, what's on your mind?" Jun Wu Yao who had been absent all this while suddenly stood beside Jun Wu Xie.

"You were the one who released Drunk Lotus?" Jun Wu Xie asked.

Jun Wu Xie smiled and surveyed the piles of 'ground meat' littered across the ground, and his smile widened. "Have you not always wanted to know how strong Drunk Lotus is?" Hence, he had given Drunk Lotus the opportunity.

It seemed, Drunk Lotus' methods of slaughter, were just right up his alley.

"I am going to the Imperial Palace." Jun Wu Xie said.

The smile on Jun Wu Yao's face stiffened.

"That was not all the people from the Qing Yun Clan. Without getting their hands on the Soul Jade, they will not give up. I expect the rest of them, to have confronted Mo Qian Yuan." Jun Wu Xie reasoned as she narrowed her eyes. From what she gathered from Long Qi, the Qing Yun Clan had attacked yesterday. It would seem that Mo Qian Yuan had fallen into the hands of the Qing Yun Clan for a day now.

What would the naive little Emperor have learnt of the ways of

the Qing Yun Clan?

“You want to save him?” Jun Wu Yao raised an eyebrow.

“Yes.”

Jun Wu Yao’s smile faded.....

“I’ll go with you.” A damsel rescuing a distressed dog, what a thankless task.

Jun Wu Xie nodded and issued her orders to the black beast and Drunk Lotus to proceed to the Imperial Palace. When she was done, she was carried up by Jun Wu Yao within his arms and they soared towards the Imperial Palace.

In front of the Lin Palace, the black beast looked in distress at the blood covered Drunk Lotus and the corner of its jaws twitched.

Drunk Lotus looked at the black beast with one eyebrow raised and jumped right onto its back and grabbed a handful of its flesh and fur in his hand. He then laughed coldly: “Dumb kitty! Take me there! Move!”

“.....” The black beast almost teared, feeling so sorry for itself.

Its mistress must never abandon it to this extreme and maniacal flower again!

Chapter 229: "Torture (1)"

The acrid smell of blood permeated the air in the Imperial Palace's main hall. Qin Yu Yan sat upright upon the throne which was symbolic to the Emperor. Her beautiful and graceful face had her usual gentle smile on, but the smile did not reach her eyes.

Below the throne in the hall, a group of Qing Yun Clan disciples led by Jiang Chen Qing sat around, their mouths sneering, as they all looked at the curled up figure of a man, lying upon the floor, in the middle of the hall.

The man's splendid clothes were now tattered, his hair a mess, and countless wounds big and small covered his huddled body. Bright red blood dripped from glaring wounds and spilled on the cold marble floors and his usual upright and straight poise had been reduced to become a tightly curled up ball, trembling in agony.

The palace maids and eunuchs huddled in a corner, forced to witness the horror before them, for never in their dreams, had they thought they would witness such atrocities.

"Your Majesty still refuses to divulge the locations of the Soul Jade? Why do you choose to suffer such torment? Qing Yun Clan and the Qi Kingdom had always been friends, why do you choose to cause us such annoyance?" Qin Yu Yan sat imposingly upon the Emperor's throne and sighed in mock exasperation, looking aggrieved, her eyes on the figure sprawled upon the cold floor.

Mo Qian Yuan, the newly crowned Emperor of the Qi Kingdom, was slated to enjoy the celebrations and the great admiration his people had for him, but he was being tortured cruelly instead, in the same main hall of the Imperial Palace, by the people from the Qing Yun Clan.

He no longer possessed the strength to struggle, and can only gasp weakly with his face upon the cold hard floor. The good

looking face, had had two deep gashes, and they opened from his left and right temples and crossed upon his face to his jaws. The blood was still flowing unabated and the pain had been forgotten by Mo Qian Yuan, as the pain of his flesh, was overshadowed by the excruciating agony felt inside his body. It felt like everything inside was being churned, with blades and he was supposed to pass out from the agony.

Mo Qian Yuan knew though, the sweet comfort of unconsciousness would not come.

He did not know how long he had been suffering under the torment, he had only remembered that it had been early in the morning when the Qing Yun Clan had barged into the Imperial Palace, and drove out all the court officials, and slammed the doors to the main hall shut. They had then dragged the ruler of the kingdom down from his throne and forced unknown poison down his throat.

The pain had begun from then.....

They had cut the tendons of his hands and feet and broken his spine. He could not even count the number of slashes and cuts he had been put through. The pain should have been too much for the mind to take, but the Qing Yun Clan disciples had forced fed him a medicine that kept him conscious. No matter how much of the excruciating pain and agony he felt, he could never fall into a dead faint, and under feel every single heart rending ounce of torment the pain brought.

Mo Qian Yuan felt like laughing, to laugh at his own naivety, to laugh at his own foolishness. All the suffering he was put through, was brought about by his very own naive compassion.....

If he had listened to Jun Wu Xie, and struck at them first, he wouldn't have fallen into the hands of the Qing Yun Clan.

But he had never imagined that the top clan under the skies, a clan known for their healing knowledge of Medicine, were capable

of employing such malevolent and cruel means against their enemies. Refusing them the sweet embrace of death, only to suffer further under torment.

He had thought that Jun Wu Xie was vicious, but what the Qing Yun Clan had put him under, made Jun Wu Xie look like an angel.

At the very least, Jun Wu Xie would never raise her hand against the innocent.

This was the wager he agreed to make with her?

Whether the Qing Yun Clan would uphold their reputation as the most revered clan throughout the lands? And whether Qin Yu Yan would be as understanding and accommodating as he had imagined her to be?

Mo Qian Yuan swallowed the blood that trickled up his throat, and his mouth curled in derision at himself with much difficulty, and the last traces of magnanimity in him was snuffed out, as he drowned in the agonising torment that washed over him.

“You still refuse to tell?” Qin Yu Yan propped her chin onto her hand, as she looked on in impatience at the mute Mo Qian Yuan. She had not expected that, a weak Emperor of such a tiny kingdom, had the audacity to lie to her.

Chapter 230: "Torture (2)"

She had been to the Royal Tomb and the Jun Family's graveyard. She had turned the places upside down and still did not manage to locate any sign of the Soul Jade.

Qin Yu Yan had decided that Mo Qian Yuan had lied to her.

The price for having deceived the Qing Yun Clan, was not something everyone could bear up under.

She would not kill Mo Qian Yuan, but keep him within an inch of his life. After she manages to force Mo Qian Yuan to divulge the location of the Soul Jade, she would personally bring him back to the Qing Yun Clan, dismember his limbs and leave him soaked in her medicinal urns, which were filled with devastating poison, and make him suffer unspeakable torment, while keeping him alive.

This was the price for deceiving the Qing Yun Clan.

"Yun Xian." Qin Yu Yan called out suddenly. Bai Yun Xian, who had been standing quietly at the side snapped to her senses, and paled visibly, as she fell to her knees in a panic before Qin Yu Yan who sat high up upon the Emperor's throne.

"Senior! I have wronged you! I will never create such mischief again!" Beads of sweat rolled down the side of her face. People were usually charmed by the gentle facade that Qin Yu Yan portrays, but as a disciple of the Qing Yun Clan who knew the inner workings within well, she knew the terror that hid behind the mask that Qin Yu Yan presented to the outside world.

The Eldest Miss of the Qing Yun Clan who always appeared gentle and affable, was actually a demoness in disguise.

Qin Yu Yan's area of expertise was not medicine, but the development of poisons!

In Qin Yu Yan's backyard, tens of enormous medicinal urns were kept. In every urn, it was filled with various brews made from

myriad poisons. She would then dismember the limbs, gouge out the eyes and cut off the tongues of people who displeased her and dump them into the urns to conduct her research into her study of poison. These people used for her research were all kept alive and refused death to suffer under their painful existence.

Even the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan were terrified of Qin Yu Yan.

The woman had never been benevolent in her ways, even when their own Qing Yun Clan disciples caused her to be annoyed, they were not let off easy either.

Qin Yu Yan looked smilingly at Bai Yun Xian who was sweating profusely and waved her hand slightly. A Qing Yun Clan disciple appeared from the back of the hall pushing a wheelchair. And seated upon the wheelchair, was the hideous and gruesome Mo Xuan Fei.

“Since you admit to your mistake, you would know what to do. You are my junior, and my father harboured high hopes for you. Being hopelessly tangled with a duke, would not be something my father would like to hear about.” Having said that, Qin Yu Yan threw a dagger at the feet of Bai Yun Xian. “Kill him, and go back with me to receive your punishment.”

Bai Yun Xian was stunned as she stared at the dagger at her feet. She hesitated a moment before she bent to gingerly pick it up. She trembled as she straightened herself and walked unsteadily towards the obviously delirious Mo Xuan Fei.

He had been a suave and charming guy, and he had been reduced to such a sorry state. He lost his good looks, and his elegant charm was missing. He was now just a nauseating pile of rot that smelled just as bad as he looked.

“Can’t bear to?” Qin Yu Yan asked, observing Bai Yun Xian.

“It’s not that.” Bai Yun Xian calmed herself. If it was Mo Xuan Fei

in the past, she might have considered herself to have some feelings for him. But after he was reduced to such a state, Bai Yun Xian had given up on any thoughts of that.

‘Kill him and my senior will spare me.’

Without much of a hesitation, Bai Yun Xian drove the dagger in her hands deep into the chest of Mo Xuan Fei. Mo Xuan Fei who had been muddled and delirious for a time seemed to wake up and regain his consciousness at that moment. The distant look in his eyes lifted and he stared befuddled at the hands holding the dagger hilt that stuck out from his chest and turned to look at Bai Yun Xian with his eyes in disbelief and grudging resentment.

“I had no other choice. Having you dead is better than getting myself killed.” Bai Yun Xian whispered through her teeth as she watched the light fade from Mo Xuan Fei’s eyes. And when he breathed his last, Bai Yun Xian turned and knelt before Qin Yu Yan.

“My senior, he is dead.”

Chapter 231: Torture (3)

Qin Yu Yan nodded, satisfied. Bai Yun Xian hurried in retreat to the side as she was relieved from her burden. Qin Yu Yan gestured to another Qing Yun Clan disciple and he walked over to the curled up figure of Mo Qian Yuan who was still upon the floor and pulled his head up by the hair, to let him see Mo Xuan Fei on the wheelchair, motionless in death.

“Your Majesty, your brother is dead. If you do not want to be like him, then tell us what we want to know.” Qin Yu Yan said indifferently to Mo Qian Yuan, who had held his mouth longer than she had expected. The poison that he had been forced to take was no ordinary poison. Its potency was not enough to immediately claim his life, but it would have caused untold damage to his internal organs, and brought enough pain to make him want to end his own life.

Even after having gone through all that, Mo Qian Yuan still refused to spill the beans.

This was what really frustrated Qin Yu Yan.

“It seems Your Majesty still does not understand your predicament.” Qin Yu Yan said softly, as she gestured for the disciple to lift Mo Qian Yuan up. “Perhaps we have been too lenient, and we need to do more to make you talk. Uncle Jiang, can you do us the honour please?”

Jiang Chen Qing walked over and grabbed the limp right hand of Mo Qian Yuan. He then held the tip of Mo Qian Yuan’s little finger and released his spiritual energy.....

“ARGHHHH!!” A pitiful howl filled the main hall.

Mo Qian Yuan’s little finger was crushed bit by bit starting from the tip by Jiang Chen Qing. More blood splattered on the floor and the palace maids and eunuchs shrank back even further into their

corner as the horrible scene played out before them.

“Is that pain enough for you?” Qin Yu Yan laughed aloud, the tinkle of her laughter was filled with malice and cruelty.

Mo Qian Yuan had been utterly decimated, the pain had driven deep into heart as he howled in agony. He did not know how much more of this unrelenting torment he would have to take before the end comes.

If only he had listened to Jun Wu Xie..... If he had gone along with what Jun Wu Xie wanted, all these would not have happened.....

“Carry on.” Qin Yu Yan laughed as she uttered those words of venom.

Jiang Chen Qing readied himself to continue his torture of Mo Qian Yuan when suddenly, the tightly shut doors of the main hall burst open, hit by a powerful force!

A handsome youth with his clothes splattered with blood rode upon a magnificent black beast charged into the main hall!

“ROAARRR!!” The black beast gave out a earth shattering roar!

After the black beast devoured the Golden Lion, he acquired the ability to roar like the Golden Lion. The roar sounded so much more dominating than its meek meows!

“Who are you!” Jiang Chen Qing threw down the hand of Mo Qian Yuan and straightened up to face the intruders, as he stared at the duo of flower and beast.

“That question, should be from me, and directed at all of you.” The cold chilly voice rang out suddenly outside the open doors. The cold expression on her face showed at the door after those words and she stood, her frosty eyes surveying everyone within the main hall, as Jun Wu Yao stood silently behind her, a hint of a curl at the corners of his mouth.

“Who and what kind of people would dare come to the Qi Kingdom to commit such atrocities!?” Jun Wu Xie’s eyes fell upon the crumpled form of Mo Qian Yuan on the floor in the middle of the hall and her brow wrinkled intensely as she frowned deeply.

Before you beat a dog, you have to know who its master is..... She had wanted Mo Qian Yuan to learn his lesson from this, but she had underestimated the cruelty of the most revered Qing Yun Clan, worshipped throughout the lands.

“Wu..... Xie.....” He barely whispered, his face white with weakness. When he saw Jun Wu Xie appear before the doors, the excruciating agony that tormented him had lifted for that moment and he summoned everything he had left within to move his mouth sporadically to form a slight lift at the ends of his mouth in relief.

‘She’s here..... finally.....’

Chapter 232: "Torture (4)"

Mo Qian Yuan voice was barely a whisper but the faint sound had burned into her ears when he had looked up at the figure of Jun Wu Xie standing at the entrance to the main hall.

‘Wu Xie?’

‘If her memory served her correctly, the Eldest Miss of the Jun Family seemed to have been named Jun Wu Xie.’

‘But they had sent their men to the Lin Palace, why would Jun Wu Xie be here?’

However, when Qin Yu Yan noticed the fabulously good looking Jun Wu Yao who stood behind Jun Wu Xie, her smile had widened and she could not take her eyes off him.

‘What a unbelievably handsome man!’

She had not known that such a attractive man existed in this world.

“I shall teach that mouth of yours some manners! If you choose to seek death, I am only too glad to grant you your wish!” Jiang Chen Qing did not care who she was, and what she looked like. He only knew that whoever dared to mock the Qing Yun Clan like that must die to atone for the unforgivable affront!

Jiang Chen Qing leaped directly at Jun Wu Xie, choosing to ignore Drunk Lotus completely to be beneath his notice. Among the three people and a beast that had suddenly appeared, only the black beast seemed to possess a little ability to battle. They three humans were too young, with the oldest among them to be just over twenty years of age. No matter how prodigious they might be, they were not a match for him!

However, before Jiang Chen Qing could even touch a corner of Jun Wu Xie’s robe, a blood coloured streaked flashed to appear right before his eyes.

The dashing youth threw a lightning quick punch at the face of Jiang Chen Qing. His speedy movements had surprised Jiang Chen Qing and he raised his arms hurriedly to block off the blow, and Drunk Lotus' punch hit him squarely on his forearms. A searing pain tore through his arms that shot throughout his entire body with its impact!

In a blink, Jiang Chen Qing had been driven back. The arm that blocked the blow from Drunk Lotus had blood running freely down its length, and its bone broken and sticking out of his flesh, visibly exposed.

‘What kind of a monstrous strength was that!?’

Jiang Chen Qing stared at Drunk Lotus, his mouth agape, his mind reeling in shock.

He, a respectably powerful blue spirit user, just had his arm broken by a fledging young youth in his teens, with a single punch? If word of this got around, nobody would have believed it!

Drunk Lotus' domineering attack, had not only shocked Jiang Chen Qing himself, but had made all the others from the Qing Yun Clan stand up in surprise!

They knew very well, the prowess Jiang Chen Qing possessed. Even if the kid had successfully sneaked an attack on him, it was impossible that Jiang Chen Qing would lose so horribly in a single pass!

Drunk Lotus raised his fists up to his chest and his knuckles made a crackling sound as he clenched his fists. The fresh blood that had just smeared his fist dripped from his fingers. He might be extremely arrogant, but there was one common aspect among all contractual ring spirits. They were fiercely protective of their masters. That obnoxious old man dared to attack Jun Wu Xie before his eyes!? He must have lived too long and was getting tired of living!

“Who in the world are you?” Jiang Chen Qing asked as he gripped his blood covered arm and stared at Drunk Lotus. He could not believe the young teenager before him possessed such power!

“You are not fit to know that.” Drunk Lotus spurned, with a laugh filled with scorn.

Qin Yu Yan watched from atop the throne with her eyes narrowed after she averted her eyes away from Jun Wu Yao’s good looks. Jiang Chen Qing had attained a blue leveled spirit and ordinary people were not a match for him. Moreover, he was skilled in poison as well. Unless the opponent was an indigo spirit user, no one should be able to dominate over Jiang Chen Qing like this.

But the youth was obviously very young, how did a single punch from him reduce an Elder of the Qing Yun Clan to such a state!?

Qin Yu Yan changed her tact and stood up suddenly. She smiled gently at the annoyingly arrogant Drunk Lotus and said: “I ponder for a reason why a respected individual such as you would grace us with your presence here today. Could it be that some sort of a misunderstanding had mistakenly been formed with the Qing Yun Clan? The Qing Yun Clan are currently handling some private matters and I would humbly request for you gracious acquiescence to make way for us to conclude them, and the Qing Yun Clan will not forget the favour shown to us today.”

No matter who this youth was, Qin Yu Yan did not want to make an enemy of him. She brought up Qing Yun Clan’s name into this to lend her credibility to encourage the youth to accede to her request. As for Mo Qian Yuan and Jun Wu Xie, she will bide her time to decide on their punishments.

Chapter 233: Fourth Slap (1)

Qin Yu Yan's guess was that the youth was probably external help that Jun Wu Xie had employed from foreign powers.

But she was thinking what Jun Wu Xie, a mere Young Miss of a miserly Lin Palace, had to offer to those foreign powers? Whatever Jun Wu Xie could offer, the Qing Yun Clan can easily double the offer.

There were no such thing such as unshakable alliances. When people stick to so called loyalty and determination, it was just that the offer was not tempting enough.

Qin Yu Yan strongly believed, that if it was a choice between the Lin Palace and the Qing Yun Clan, any dolt would know to choose the latter.

Drunk Lotus gave a look of disdain as he turned to the pretentious woman before him, clicking his mouth in disgust.

“Are you done with your drivel? If you are done, sit down, shut your trap and await your death! Qing Yun Clan? You're not even fit to carry my shoes!” Using a clan of humans to bait a ring spirit!? Was she of unsound mind?

Qin Yu Yan's face froze in an expression of shock. Nobody had ever rejected the favour of the almighty Qing Yun Clan. Ever. Qin Yu Yan fumed and sputtered, but did not manage to get a word out in her rage.

Qing Yun Clan, these three words had never failed to impress before. This was the first time they were spurned so completely, and it felt just like a big slap on her face!

“Drunk Lotus.” Jun Wu Xie called out.

“Here!”

“Cut the chatter, obliterate.” Jun Wu Xie frowned. She had

neither interest nor the patience for conversation with the Qing Yun Clan. When they had made their move against the Jun Family father and son, they had their fates sealed, and were destined to die.

Why should she listen to people who are dead, and their senseless pratter?

“Yes, Miss!” Drunk Lotus’ mouth curled up at the corners when Jun Wu Xie gave her orders. The murder in his eyes shone unbridled and the bloodied figure rushed, a blur of movements, right at Jiang Chen Qing.

“Little Black.”

“MEOW... ROARRR!!”

“Fetch him.” Jun Wu Xie ordered calmly.

The black beast’s mind was linked to her mistress and naturally knew what Jun Wu Xie meant. It could be none other than Mo Qian Yuan who was at death’s door!

The black beast zoomed towards the middle of the hall, making a beeline towards Mo Qian Yuan.

Qin Yu Yan could only watch on in amazement as the tide radically changed against her. She did not expect the powerful youth to submit to Jun Wu Xie’s instructions so eagerly and Jun Wu Xie had taken her by surprise further when she had not tried to negotiate and went right for the kill immediately!

Her domineering methods were not sparing the Qing Yun Clan the tiniest bit of deference to the reverence of their name!

“Utter brazen insolence! Jun Wu Xie! Do not be too arrogant! You dare show such contempt to the Qing Yun Clan! Everyone! I hereby lay my terms to you. Anyone who takes the heads of Jun Wu Xie and Drunk Lotus in this hall shall have Qing Yun Clan owe them a debt of gratitude, and we will fulfill a request of yours in the future. I will endorse this agreement on behalf of my father here

now!” Qin Yu Yan was livid and filled with so much rage that she threw out an irrefusable and tempting offer!

There were only a few Qing Yun Clan disciples present, and the remaining people consisted of more than ten expert exponents who were here by Qing Yun Clan’s invitation and have of them had accepted due to their various urgent needs for Qing Yun Clan’s assistance. With Qin Yu Yan’s commitment and promise, all of them did not hesitate to jump into the fray!

In a flash, more than ten of the invited exponents who had remained seated all this time made their move. All of them possessed at least a blue spirit but one. He was the same and Wen Xin Han, who broke through to the indigo level!

Qin Yu Yan continued to stare at Jun Wu Xie with her jaw tightly clenched. When she had thrown out her offer of the bounty, she had consciously excluded the gorgeous man standing behind Jun Wu Xie.

He had remained silent throughout, and she did not have a clue on his identity. If he knew what was good for him, she would bring him back to the Qing Yun Clan after Jun Wu Xie was taken down. If he was oblivious to his good fortune.....

Qin Yu Yan’s eyes gleamed coldly, she had many medicinal urns waiting for him in her backyard!

Chapter 234: “Fourth Slap (2)”

Utter chaos ensued in the main hall of the Imperial Palace the next moment. The palace maids and eunuchs hiding in the corner started screaming shrilly when they found that they had no other space to retreat into.

“Hmm? You are coming at me all at once? Fantastic!” In face of more than ten attackers rushing towards him at once, Drunk Lotus did not back off one bit. The frenzy had instead made his adrenaline start pumping. He downed the rest of the wine in the jar at once, glugging down the fragrant and one of the finest of wine before he threw the jar out to smash against the wall. The intoxicating wine worked through Drunk Lotus’ body and his cheeks flushed red as he shouted in satisfaction: “WHOA! Your Lord Drunk Lotus am going to enjoy this massacre!”

“I’ll see how long your arrogance lasts! Everyone! Take his head!” Jiang Chen Qing stared darkly at Drunk Lotus with his jaw clenched. He had never been so humiliated throughout the years he had lived. He could not wait to crush his bones and scatter his ashes!

The disciples of the Qing Yun Clan joined forces with the blue spirit users to attack Drunk Lotus. The black beast took the opportunity to slip through the crowd, but was spotted by two blue spirit users who tried to block its path. The massive black beast proved to be too fast for them as it zigzagged it way past without them realising the beast had already gone past them.

[You fools enjoy your bout with Drunk Lotus! I have specific orders!]

The black beast slunk itself low on the ground, having no intention to engage the enemy as he neared his target.

The lone mighty indigo spirit users set his eyes on Jun Wu Xie and roped in three of the blue spirit users and charged at Jun Wu

Xie. They could clearly see that this young sapling of a girl was the commander of the group. To kill a snake, you need to strike at its head. As long as they kill the little lass, the youth and the black beast will crumble.

However, they had completely overlooked the tall and handsome man standing behind Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Yao had been smiling all this while. Watching the screaming foursome who leapt at Jun Wu Xie, his eyebrow twitched slightly. Just when the indigo spirit user was about to touch Jun Wu Xie, he wrapped an arm around Jun Wu Xie and his tall frame soared into the air, his movements both elegant and graceful.

“Do not dirty my little darling’s dress with your filthy hands.” Jun Wu Yao said cheekily with a smile, but the smile did not show within his eyes.

The indigo spirit user leapt in pursuit, his eyes locked on the attractive face of Jun Wu Yao.

Jun Wu Yao flicked his finger slightly and several dark streaks shot lightning quick towards the four pursuers’ faces!

Once upon their faces, the black streaks took on a physical form. They were actually black snakes about the width of a finger! The scales on their bodies protruded slightly, and were razor sharp just like blades and they were lined with potent poison. The tiny black snakes slit deep red gashes on the faces of the four pursuers and a dark fog continued to permeate from above them and screams of agony escaped from the four highly respected expert exponents!

The flesh on their faces seared as though a red hot iron bar was pressed against their faces, and the pain was unbearable. They then realised in horror that the pain was spreading throughout their bodies!

“These snakes are poisonous! Protect your bodies with your

spiritual energies!” The indigo spirit user reacted under the dire circumstances and immediately released his spiritual energy from his body and an indigo glow enveloped his body. The other three had followed suit.

“That bit of spiritual energy and you want to rid yourselves of my Snakes of Ink?” Jun Wu Yao gave out a low laugh.

The four men had released their spiritual energies and covered their bodies in it to protect themselves from the attacks of the Ink Snakes. But their spiritual energies had no effect on the little creatures, and they were extremely quick and agile. The snakes then slipped under their collars and where they passed, a trail of searing pain followed tearing up the flesh!

Their spiritual energies had not helped them the tiniest bit!

Not only the blue spirit experts, even the mightiest among them, the indigo spirit expert had been helpless against the agony from the Ink Snakes.

The Snakes of Ink were small in size and extremely quick and agile. Before they could catch hold of it, they had slipped under their clothes and in the next moment, the clothes turned a bright shade of red, and they fell to the ground in pain.

The man who had released the Ink Snakes looked on, with Jun Wu Xie in his arms, a wide smile on his face, as he reveled in his own work.

Chapter 235: “Fourth Slap (3)”

Within moments, the four expert exponents fell under the Ink Snakes’ furious attack, lying on the ground twitching in convulsions.

Qin Yu Yan who stood before the throne watched in dismay at all that was happening. She could not believe her eyes! That gorgeous specimen of a man had such heaven defying abilities!

He had just wriggled his finger and several of the snakes he released had taken down four highly skilled blue spirit experts and even the mightiest among them, the indigo spirit user, in just mere moments with a single attack!

Where did his overpowering might come from!?

Her adoration quickly turned to fear, and the ever present gentle smile on Qin Yu Yan’s face faded as the fear grew.

Jun Wu Yao landed gently with Jun Wu Xie within his arms, and his attention was on Jun Wu Xie as he fussed around her to make sure that not a single drop of blood had stained his little darling, not sparing the convulsing foursome a single glance.

Within the Imperial main hall, Drunk Lotus was totally immersed into the heat of battle, his beautiful eyes were aflame in battle rage, teetering on the edge of madness. His lightning quick punches were too fast to be seen and every single one of them brought renewed agony to his multitude of opponents.

Encasing your body in a spiritual energy shield?

Highly skilled blue spirit experts?

They were felled one after another under Drunk Lotus’ ferocious and tyrannical endless flurry of punches and all their feeble attempts at resistance looked like a joke.

A lone punch had blasted a Qing Yun Clan disciple’s head open

and the blood had soaked through Drunk Lotus' already blood covered once white robes. The heavy stench of blood drove Drunk Lotus deeper into his frenzy and his body emitted a thick murderous aura as his attacks intensified. Jiang Chen Qing who had screamed for Drunk Lotus' head had both his arms broken and had been twisted in grotesque angles as well as his vertebrae. He was lying in a sorry heap as he watched on in horror at the descent of Death onto the mortal realm!

Jiang Chen Qing understood now, how Jun Wu Xie, as a member of the targeted Jun Family, could make her way here to the Imperial Palace.

Judging from Drunk Lotus' prowess, the force despatched to the Lin Palace had undoubtedly been annihilated!

Jiang Chen Qing never would have imagined, he, who had lived half his life, dominating over most people, would trip up and meet his end in a tiny kingdom like Qi, which had been founded less than a hundred years.

Though, no one would have expected, that such a terrifying youth existed in the miniscule Kingdom of Qi.

With his devastating strength, an indigo spirit exponent was not his match, even the non existent topmost legendary purple spirit might just be able to combat on equal footing with him.

All traces of arrogance and haughty superiority had been obliterated along with his body under Drunk Lotus' punches. He could only lie upon the ground in futility as he saw the others massacred under Drunk Lotus' insane onslaught.

The black beast carried the barely alive Mo Qian Yuan through the chaos upon its back. Mo Qian Yuan had already been tortured to within an inch of his life, and with the black beast's jolting dash through the main hall, his insides had threatened to come out through his mouth when he clenched his jaw tight to last the nightmarish journey.

He had held on with everything he had and more, and he must not give up now.

[He's in rather bad shape, really bad.] The black beast stopped in front of Jun Wu Xie and swished its long furry tail.

It knew it was no doctor, but having tottered behind Jun Wu Xie all this while, from all it had seen had heard, it could see that Mo Qian Yuan had not long to live. The only reason Mo Qian Yuan was still alive was only because the Qing Yun Clan had wanted to know from him the location of the Soul Jade. But his organs had started to fail, the tendons on his limbs were cut, and his veins and arteries blocked. Death was not far away for him.

Jun Wu Xie's eyes narrowed when she saw Mo Qian Yuan. She was used to seeing blood, but the sight of the pitiful state Mo Qian Yuan was in made Jun Wu Xie frown unconsciously.

These people were not just ordinarily cruel.

Mo Qian Yuan was almost just an empty shell, and he lived only through the subsistence of medicine fed to force his consciousness. Hanging on in his last breathes, his lips were tightly pressed together. But the glaringly red blood, continued to seep out from the corner of his mouth.

Jun Wu Xie breathed in deeply and looked at Drunk Lotus who was happily engrossed in his killing, and she said chillingly: "Finish it up quick."

She can wait, but Mo Qian Yuan's injuries, could not afford to.

Chapter 236: “Fourth Slap (4)”

Drunk Lotus was enjoying himself immensely and had been caught up with battle lust when he heard Jun Wu Xie's orders which caused him to pause mid battle, momentarily.

The breather that his highly skilled opponents received from Drunk Lotus' sudden pause only made their heart cringe further.

‘Did she say finish it up quick!?’

‘This monster was holding back!?’

The group of skilled experts had jumped at the chance to gain the favour of the Qing Yun Clan by just killing a few perceived young and therefore weak hot headed youths, had by now deeply regretted their earlier decision, but it was too late.

Having broken through their ring spirits to the blue level had made them extraordinary figures, and every single one of them had held sway over in their own countries.

If not for the highly regarded and revered Qing Yun Clan's invitation, they would never have made their way to such a distant and tiny kingdom like Qi. None of them had expected this trip to be the last one of their lives.

The young Qi Kingdom, less than a century since its founding, was seen as totally insignificant among the various mighty powers. Bigger countries thought it beneath their notice to attack, smaller kingdoms lamented the distance making it impossible to invade and their immediate neighbours evenly matched them in might. This had enabled the Qi Kingdom to prosper and build their nation in these tumultuous and chaotic times.

In the eyes of the expert exponents, a tiny kingdom like this, could not even compare with the region and districts under their jurisdiction.

But, it was right in this tiny, insignificant, and despised kingdom

that such a terrifying and unstoppable demon had appeared!

Just in his teens, and he could easily kill a blue spirit user. Even surrounded and under the simultaneous assault of more than ten highly skilled experts, he was holding up very well!

‘Was this guy even human!?’

Drunk Lotus was no human, but a pity, these arrogant and shallow experts, would never ever know that.

“Spare us! As for whatever damage we have caused, the Qing Yun Clan will repay you tenfold! Whatever you ask for, we will agree to it! I am an Elder of the Qing Yun Clan! I have countless precious and rare elixirs and pills!” Jun Wu Xie’s ‘Finish it up quick’ had driven his mind to near madness as he knew it better than anyone, the power the youth possessed, and he obeyed Jun Wu Xie’s every single command.

He believed, whatever Jun Wu Xie ordered, the youth would deliver!

The youth obviously did not care about any repercussions of vengeance by the Qing Yun Clan!

Death had never felt so close, the haughty Jiang Chen Qing finally learnt fear.

Drunk Lotus frowned and looked at Jiang Chen Qing, and turned in query to Jun Wu Xie. He did not know anything about these deals that humans made between themselves. To kill or to leave alive, was entirely up to his Mistress.

Jiang Chen Qing saw that his words had an effect, as the youth had turned to Jun Wu Xie for instructions. He hurriedly continued, “Miss Jun, if you let us go today, I will get our Sovereign to treat your uncle’s legs!” He vaguely remembered, the Jun Family seemed to have a crippled young lord.

Jun Wu Xie had opened her mouth to reply, but Jiang Chen Qing’s words had stopped her. Her eyes then narrowed.

“My uncle’s legs, were previously treated by your Sovereign.”

Jiang Chen Qing said hastily: “It would be different this time! The Sovereign had not really wanted to treat him that time. I guarantee that this time, if you are to let us go, I will ask the Sovereign to treat your uncle’s legs for sure!”

Jun Wu Xie’s face darkened and her eyes grew frosty. The icy stare bore into Jiang Chen Qing’s bloodied face.

“Drunk Lotus.”

“Here!”

“Silence that trap.”

Jiang Chen Qing’s eyes widened in shock, and he stared in disbelief at Jun Wu Xie. Why did she suddenly decide to kill him!?

He was totally clueless, that his own words had just just sealed his fate further.....

If he had only kept his silence, he might have outlived the others, although it had been decided, all of them were to die here, today.

Chapter 237: “Fourth Slap (5)”

Before Jiang Chen Qing had recovered from Jun Wu Xie’s shocking command, Drunk Lotus suddenly appeared in front of him. With his vertebrae snapped, he hung like a limp rag doll as Drunk Lotus picked him up. The others watched on in horror and only cringed in silence as they had grown fearful of Drunk Lotus’ prowess while Jiang Chen Qing’s face grew pale and was helpless to offer any resistance.

“You brought doom upon yourself, if you had remained silent, I had intended to kill you last. But you had to displease my mistress didn’t you? That sealed your fate.” Drunk Lotus laughed mockingly at Jiang Chen Qing. Jun Wu Xie had always been cold and unfeeling, and very few things in the world can incite her to anger.

But anything that involved the members of the Jun Family, easily ignited the dormant murderous intent that within her.

This dolt actually openly admitted that the Qing Yun Clan Sovereign had not been serious in treating Jun Qing previously.

They let Jun Qing stay crippled for ten long years, there was no way Jun Wu Xie would show the tiniest bit of mercy to them.

They had repeatedly harmed the Jun Family, the scoundrel truly deserved it.

“Don’t.....” Jiang Chen Qing was trembling in fright. He had lost all the cockiness that had been so prevalent when he first arrived in Qi and started pleading for his life.

“I might as well tell you. My Mistress’ knowledge and skills in medicine overshadows your beloved quack Sovereign’s by leaps and bounds and she has already healed her uncle’s legs.” Drunk Lotus enjoyed seeing the expressions on Jiang Chen Qing’s face switching between fear and shock when he could have killed him

with a single blow, but that would have been too easy for him. For someone who caused displeasure to his Mistress, Drunk Lotus wanted him to feel and languish in horror as the fingers of fear creep in and gripped the heart before he dies.

Jiang Chen Qing's face had turned deathly white, and he has accomplished what he wanted, and there was no reason to prolong it.

His blood smeared fist raised and smashed right into the face of Jiang Chen Qing. His head exploded with the impact and blood, bone and brain covered Drunk Lotus. There was no disgust, but the gore only brightened the flame that was in his eyes.

The taste of slaughter, was heavenly sweet!

Releasing his grip, he dropped the headless body of Jiang Chen Qing on the floor, and rushed straight at his next target.

Agonized screams sounded out from the main hall, and the highly skilled aggressors that had thrashed the Qi Kingdom's Imperial authority and trampled over the Jun Family's dignity had now been reduced to be like animals awaiting their slaughter, resisting in futility against the fists of Drunk Lotus, and only resulting in a more painful death.

He had looked to be such a charming and glamorous youth, but his method of killing was many times more bloody and gory than anything they had ever seen!

In just a short while, ravaged and broken bodies lay scattered around Drunk Lotus.

The smell of blood grew thick within the main hall and almost all of the people from the Qing Yun Clan had been disposed off, except for a lone Qin Yu Yan and a visibly shaking Bai Yun Xian who had hid in a corner.

Qin Yu Yan was speechless as she stared upon the bloody sight within the main hall, as fear and shock were reflected in her eyes.

Jiang Chen Qing was dead, the Qing Yun Clan disciples were dead, and even the invited highly skilled experts, were all dead.....

She raised her head as the blood drained from her face and she looked at Jun Wu Xie standing before the doors of the main hall. She had been the one who had issued the orders for everything that had transpired here today. Jun Wu Xie had only been a Young Miss of a tiny unnoticed Qi Kingdom's, Lin Palace. What did she have to offer to employ such overly powerful allies to her cause?

“Mistress, that one over there..... kill?” Drunk Lotus strode over to stand before Jun Wu Xie, his face beaming in content, as he pointed his slender finger at Qin Yu Yan who was standing before the throne.

That finger, pointed in her direction, had made Qin Yu Yan's blood turn to ice, as she staggered backwards in a panic and fell awkwardly back onto the throne.

The glittering throne had blood splattered all over it in the earlier chaos and slaughter, and the contrasting dark red blood against the bright glittery gold make it a ghastly sight to see.

Chapter 238: “Fourth Slap (6)”

“You cannot kill me, I am the eldest daughter of the Qing Yun Clan’s Sovereign. If you dare to kill me, my father will spare none of you, and the Qing Yun Clan will obliterate the whole of your Qi Kingdom!” Forcefully squeezing out the last remaining vestiges of arrogance within her, Qin Yu Yan stared at Jun Wu Xie, as she forced down the fear that threatened to overcome her but her hand betrayed her false bravado as her knuckles turned white from the tight grip she exerted upon the arm of the throne.

Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow. She had not had any direct contact with Qin Yu Yan before this, but her threat had sounded exactly like what Bai Yun Xian had thrown at her before.

Recalling the scene, Jun Wu Xie turned to look at Bai Yun Xian who was hiding silently in the corner, trying her best not to be noticed. Jun Wu Xie’s stare was enough to bring Bai Yun Xian to her knees as her knees buckled and she fell heavily with a loud thud onto the ground.

Besides Qing Yun Clan, couldn’t they say something new?

“Bring her.” Jun Wu Xie said softly.

Drunk Lotus leapt up to the throne and a scream erupted from Qin Yu Yan’s throat.

The pampered and spoilt Qin Yu Yan was no match for Drunk Lotus and almost immediately, Qin Yu Yan was dragged unceremoniously by the hair off the throne to come before Jun Wu Xie.

The Eldest Miss of the Qing Yun Clan, was handled roughly by the abrasive Drunk Lotus, who did not even see her as human.

“The poison in him, was given by you?” Jun Wu Xie pointed at Mo Qian Yuan upon the black beast’s back.

Qin Yu Yan’s lips trembled and thought to push the blame only

the deceased Jiang Chen Qing, but the cold frosty eyes before her made her change her mind in a hurry and swallowed back the lie that was at her throat.

“I have the antidote!” Qin Yu Yan offered hurriedly.

A mocking laugh sounded from the corner where Bai Yun Xian had fallen. She had not been close to Qin Yu Yan and when she saw the always haughty and arrogant Eldest Miss falling into the same pit as she had before, her heart lit with twisted glee.

Antidote?

With Jun Wu Xie’s knowledge in medicine, she wouldn’t care for Qin Yu Yan’s antidote.

“Poisons and antidotes, hand over all that you have.” Jun Wu Xie ordered dismissively.

Qin Yu Yan hurriedly took out all the poison and antidote bottles she had on her, but Jun Wu Xie simply said: “All.”

Qin Yu Yan was stunned for a moment and in the next second, a sharp pain on her scalp shot through her entire body that brought unstoppable tears to her eyes and she looked pitifully at the gorgeous man standing behind Jun Wu Xie, pleading for help.

And Jun Wu Yao only smiled devilishly.

“Do you not understand? Take out all the poisons and antidotes you have on you!” Drunk Lotus pulled impatiently on Qin Yu Yan’s hair again but he exerted too much of his strength and found that he held a bunch of hair in his hands.

Having a bunch of her hair pulled out forcefully, she howled in pain at that moment and Drunk Lotus grabbed at another bunch before she could recover.

“Hurry it up or I’ll pull out all your hair.” Jun Wu Xie did not give him orders to kill her, but torture should be all right!

Drunk Lotus’ ominous warning terrified Qin Yu Yan greatly and

she flurried in haste to take out every single bottle of elixir, medicine and every last bottle she had on her to put them all before Jun Wu Xie.

More than ten bottles were displayed before Jun Wu Xie as she stared at the pale faced Qin Yu Yan, and turned to look at the bottles. She picked them up one by one and sniffed at them.

“If you would spare me, I can give you however much elixirs or medicines that you want! My father will give them to you, anything that you want!” Drunk Lotus’ brutality had scared the wits out of Qin Yu Yan and she was bawling her eyes out in pain. The graceful and beautiful face had lost all its former glory and with the way she looked now, no one would be able to picture her to be one and the same person of the cruel, vicious and venomously scheming Eldest Miss of the greatly feared and revered Qing Yun Clan.

Chapter 239: "All For You (1)"

Jun Wu Xie ignored the crying Qin Yu Yan and picked out a few bottles before she threw the rest on the floor.

The elixirs that had many people fight tooth and nail for were thrashed and scattered on the ground. A fragrant aroma emitted from the open bottles that were lying on the floor.

Qin Yu Yan's eyes widened in shock as she stared at the bottles that Jun Wu Xie threw away, knowing very well what they had contained.

Jun Wu Xie had thrown all the elixirs and medicines with healing properties, including the antidotes! What she held in her hand were all poison!

"Pry open her mouth." Jun Wu Xie told Drunk Lotus.

Qin Yu Yan went ballistic as she struggled fiercely with all her might. But her strength was no match for Drunk Lotus'.

Drunk Lotus held Qin Yu Yan mouth open easily. She was helpless and could only stare wide eyed in fear as tears ran freely down her face and pleading sounds came out of her mouth as Drunk Lotus held her mouth open.

"Scared?" Jun Wu Xie looked at Qin Yu Yan and asked coldly.

Qin Yu Yan blinked her eyes rapidly. Not just plain scared, but absolutely terrified!

Qin Yu Yan had never met anyone insane like Jun Wu Xie, whose actions went beyond reason. Even after knowing she was the Eldest Miss of the all powerful Qing Yun Clan, Jun Wu Xie was just as vicious!

Jun Wu Xie's eyes narrowed as she looked upon the tear streaked face of Qin Yu Yan and asked: "When you set your hands upon Mo Qian Yuan, you had been fearless then." The bottles of poison that

Jun Wu Xie held within her hands, were exactly what Qin Yu Yan had forced into Mo Qian Yuan's body. Qin Yu Yan felt the cold fingers of fear creep up on her, when she had forced fed the poisons into Mo Qian Yuan and saw him thrash and writhe in agony, she had watched on in satisfaction.

Without hesitation, Jun Wu Xie poured everything within those bottles into the wide open mouth of Qin Yu Yan. Drunk Lotus clamped Qin Yu Yan's mouth shut and held it closed, forcing her to swallow the lethal poisons down her throat.

"Release her." Jun Wu Xie then commanded.

Drunk Lotus tossed her aside and wiped his hands in disgust as if he had been holding something extremely filthy.

In moments, the poison in her stomach started to take effect. The mused up Qin Yu Yan felt the sudden surge of agonizing pain throughout her body and curled up tightly on the floor and starting trembling violently. She wailed and howled through the pain, interjected with piercing screams, reduced to a sorry sight to behold.

Jun Wu Xie watched on coldly at Qin Yu Yan, her eyes devoid of any compassion or pity.

Magnanimity to your enemies equates to cruelty to yourself.

When the Qing Yun Clan had raised their hand against the Jun Family and Mo Qian Yuan, they had not shown a shred of compassion, the current situation had no place for unwanted and unneeded saintly benevolence.

When people take an inch, she reciprocates by taking a yard.

These people have caused harm to her family and her ally, and she was just returning the favour, tenfold!

"Since the Qing Yun Clan are as omnipotent as you put it, I shall leave you here in the main hall to save yourself. I will leave all those antidotes behind, all for you." Jun Wu Xie told Qin Yu Yan.

As she said those words, Drunk Lotus and the one hiding in the corner, Bai Yun Xian, were stunned for the moment.

What was Jun Wu Xie saying? Did she just say she would leave Qin Yu Yan the antidote? Wouldn't that allow Qin Yu Yan to escape her fate?

Even Qin Yu Yan who was still under unbearable torment, struggle to sit up at those words. Her eyes which had dimmed in resignation sparked with a glimmer of hope and her heart soared.

Jun Wu Xie would not kill her!

Jun Wu Xie observed Qin Yu Yan and raised her hand the next moment. An orange ball of spiritual energy formed out of her open palm, and streaked straight at the pile of antidotes on the ground and blasted them into fine powder. The highly prized antidotes and elixirs mixed in a heap, reduced to ash. Broken porcelain bits were mixed hopelessly among the charred black powder, impossible to separate.

“It's all for you.”

Chapter 240: "All For You (2)"

As promised, Jun Wu Xie had left the antidotes behind for Qin Yu Yan. The only catch was to identify and separate the antidote from the pile of charred powder and porcelain bits.

Even if Qin Yu Yan was not under torment from the agonizing pain from the poison, it was still impossible to pick out the antidote from the pile of trash.

The glimmer of hope that had shone through, was mercilessly extinguished and robbed from her the next moment, throwing Qin Yu Yan deeper down into the depths of despair.

Falling from the high clouds and into the mud low on the ground, feeling the disparity and futility of the situation, Qin Yu Yan was utterly devastated and she lay curled up, resigned.

The agony brought about by the poison, wrecked at her body, and Jun Wu Xie's mockery by raising her hopes and then shattering it completely broke the will of Qin Yu Yan.

Jun Wu Xie to offer a lifeline?

In your dreams.....

After seeing Mo Qian Yuan's condition, Jun Wu Xie had wanted to skin her alive.

Jun Wu Xie had spent so much time and effort to nurse and enable the recuperation of Mo Qian Yuan into such a healthy specimen, yet Qin Yu Yan had come and erased all that in one stroke. It was all back to square one!

Qin Yu Yan did not dare harbour the tiniest sliver of anticipation anymore, and had sunk deep into despair as the pain continue to wreck her body. The agony brought about convulsions and her bones felt like millions of ants were slowly biting and chipping away at them.

All these poisons with their malicious effects were made by her own hands. Qin Yu Yan had used them on countless people before to inflict the unspeakable torment upon her enemies. She had never thought that the poisons of her own device, would one day be turned around to be used to give her a taste of it herself!

“Everyone is to get out of here and leave the main hall to allow our Miss Qin to find the antidote in peace.” Jun Wu Xie ordered tonelessly. But her words were music to the many ears huddled in the corner as palace maids and eunuchs held back their tears of joy as they rushed out in escape from the bloody and gory main hall, filled with mutilated corpses strewn all over.

Bai Yun Xian remained in her corner, left with nowhere to go, and stood woodenly where she was, looking with dread at Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie turned towards her and Bai Yun Xian hurried to kneel before Jun Wu Xie before she could say anything and rambled on ashen faced: “I did not tell them anything! I swear! Qin Yu Yan forced me to kill Mo Xuan Fei! I..... I..... really never said anything! Not a single word!”

Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow. She did not know, that Bai Yun Xian had been so afraid of her to this extent.

But.....

Mo Xuan Fei is dead? He got off too easy.

“Stand up.” Jun Wu Xie said coldly. Bai Yun Xian was still of use, and she will allow her to live, for now.

If Bai Yun Xian had revealed anything to Qin Yu Yan, she would have outlived her usefulness. But it seemed that, she was not that dumb.

Bai Yun Xian’s body shook as she stood up, as she knew she had just managed to keep herself alive this time.

“You stay here, and make sure she does not kill herself.” said Jun

Wu Xie as she gestured at Qin Yu Yan.

Bai Yun Xian nodded her head furiously, not daring to comment.

With all said and done here, Jun Wu Xie turned to leave and Jun Wu Yao walked with her. The black beast carried Mo Qian Yuan on its back and followed after. Drunk Lotus, who brought up the rear, hooked his hands on the doors as he stepped out, and pulled the doors of the Imperial main hall shut tightly behind him, shutting out the gory scene within.

In the main hall, only Qin Yu Yan, who was trembling violently, and Bai Yun Xian, who heaved a huge sigh of relief, were left.

A bright red trickle ran down the corner of Qin Yu Yan's mouth. Her eyes were venomous as she stared at Bai Yun Xian. She had realised from Bai Yun Xian's pleading that the slut, Bai Yun Xian, had conspired with Jun Wu Xie all this while.

Bai Yun Xian was put off by Qin Yu Yan's stare and said with a frown: "Senior, you can't blame me for this. Haven't both you and Master always taught me, the wise must bend according to changing circumstances?"

Chapter 241: "All For You (3)"

"It's no use staring at me, I wouldn't have betrayed the Qing Yun Clan, but you guys are really not a match for Jun Wu Xie." Bai Yun Xian hesitated a moment, before she decided that Qin Yu Yan was doomed anyway, and there was no need to hide anymore. She then revealed the truth: "Actually, the poison that inflicted Mo Xuan Fei was Jun Wu Xie's doing, and she had forced the same poison onto me. I had intentionally led all of you to give Mo Xuan Fei a diagnosis to see whether you or Jiang Chen Qing would be able to counter the poison. If either of you had been able to do it, I would have told you the truth then."

"But both of you had disappointed me then, when both of did not even manage to detect the cause. How could I have told you anything then? Senior, haven't you always prided yourself on your exemplary skills in medicine? How could you be stumped so completely by a poison concocted by a little young lass?" Bai Yun Xian felt relieved as she got everything off her chest and managed to smile.

The law of the jungle also meant every man for himself to Bai Yun Xian.

She was only trying to keep herself alive.

Even the high and mighty Qin Yu Yan had fallen so hard before Jun Wu Xie, and it brought Bai Yun Xian a twisted sense of satisfaction, but on the other hand, her fear of Jun Wu Xie had intensified.

Equipped with medical skills that the Qing Yun Clan could only dream of acquiring, and having mighty experts of unfathomable strength beside her, Bai Yun Xian would not dare to go against Jun Wu Xie ever again even if she had a hundred lives. She only wished to live, and did not dare harbour any hatred.

Qin Yu Yan could not speak as the pain overcame her, and only

managed to stare with hate filled eyes at Bai Yun Xian, wishing she could swallow her up whole!

“S..... lut.....” Trying with all her might, she managed to spit out a single syllable to curse, but at the cost of vomiting out blood that splattered on the floor.

“Senior, I would advise you to conserve your strength, as Jun Wu Xie will not allow you to die so easily. I saw the poison she poured into your mouth, it was all made by your own hands wasn't it? You should know their effects better than anyone. As long as no one moves you, you will not die from it even after days of its agonizing torment. Jun Wu Xie might be young, but her schemes and brains were the best I have ever seen. Did you not wonder why the Qi Kingdom suddenly had a change of their rulership? It was achieved through the scheme of Jun Wu Xie, who had single handedly plotted it. The former ruler of the Qi Kingdom, is currently still locked in the Imperial Dungeon suffering a fate worse than death. And you had confronted her assuming she was just another ordinary teen. How naive.” Bai Yun Xian could not help but mock the helpless Qin Yu Yan thrashing upon the ground.

For all those times she had been toyed and suppressed in the Qing Yun Clan by Qin Yu Yan in the past, Bai Yun Xian finally got the chance to give vent here in Qi.

Although twisted, her feeble mocking as her form of vengeance upon Qin Yu Yan, brought Bai Yun Xian a sense of satisfaction.

Qin Yu Yan wanted nothing more than to kill the traitorous Bai Yun Xian, but after hearing Bai Yun Xian's words, fear crept into her heart.

The poison that she had concocted herself, would indeed not kill her within the next few days, but the unbearable torment that came with it was truly a fate worse than death.

The last thing she would have expected, was that her own poison that she had meticulously crafted to inflict the most torturous

agony, would one day be used upon herself.

Bai Yun Xian was right, and she knew it better than anyone else.

Jun Wu Xie had not killed her then, but it was not mercy that stayed her hand, but her vicious intention to inflict the most agonizing pain, and to prolong the torment through days before she can fall into the sweet embrace of death.

By now, death, to Qin Yu Yan, was an indulgence!

“Yun..... Xian..... k..... kill..... me.....” Tears fell from her eyes as blood spurted out from her mouth.

Bai Yun Xian looked at her with disdain, and patted Qin Yu Yan on her sleeve: “Senior, you should revel in your own work. Have you not realised? This is Jun Wu Xie’s way of payback on Mo Qian Yuan’s behalf.” She sighed at the foolishness of Qin Yu Yan.....

Chapter 242: “Revival (1)”

The black beast carried Mo Qian Yuan upon its back and followed Jun Wu Xie to Mo Qian Yuan’s living chambers in the Imperial Palace. The guards and palace maids saw Jun Wu Xie approach and they all backed off in retreat to allow her passage. They could only crane their neck and observe silently after the queer entourage passed them and entered the chambers.

Mo Qian Yuan’s injuries were severe, it wasn’t just the poison within, but also the various wounds, big and small, that threatened to end his life. It was a rather sticky situation, even for her prodigious skills.

Jun Wu Xie got Drunk Lotus to transfer Mo Qian Yuan to the bed and immediately removed several bottles of elixirs and medicine from her body. Next, she held her silver needles and applied acupuncture quickly and skillfully on various major acupressure points on Mo Qian Yuan at once.

Dark red blood that was almost black flowed out from Mo Qian Yuan and dripped off the silver needles. Without hesitation, Jun Wu Xie then pushed three elixirs in Mo Qian Yuan’s mouth and helped him to ingest them before she started to tend to the numerous external wounds.

Jun Wu Yao stood smilingly, with his arms crossed before his chest, as he observed Jun Wu Xie’s quick hands and mind while she laboured endlessly to save a life.

“Meow.”

[Mistress, the dumb Emperor is really gravely injured.]

The black beast who had carried Mo Qian Yuan all the way to the living chambers licked at its paws. It had felt that Mo Qian Yuan’s breathes were very shallow and weak, and he looked very much on the verge of death.

His bones had been broken in many places, and many of his arteries and veins were blocked. Most of his organs were starting to fail and his untreated wounds were beginning to fester and inflame. All these had brought about a high fever and signs of dehydration were starting to surface. On top of all this, was the lethal poison attacking Mo Qian Yuan from the inside. He would not last much longer if he was not treated immediately.

“Meowww?”

[You’re still going to save him? Even if it’s you, I think it will still require a great amount of effort. Why don’t we just push another Emperor to ascend to the throne?]

Jun Wu Xie frowned and ignored the black beast ramblings.

But the black beasts words had made her eyes turn more chilly.

If not for the Qing Yun Clan’s completely merciless and vicious methods, she wouldn’t have such a big headache now.

The former Emperor had stifled and schemed against Mo Qian Yuan from a young age, and he was given Jade Nectar tinged with Wheat Night Flower over a long period which had severely weakened Mo Qian Yuan’s body foundation. If not for Jun Wu Xie prior selfless generosity with her countless divine elixirs, and even feeding him the Snow Lotus’s seeds that built up his strength, Mo Qian Yuan would not have lasted till she got there this time. But, even if a healthy grown man had undergone the same torment under the hands of the Qing Yun Clan, he would not be far from death either.

“This guy here, seems to attract calamities and disaster.” Drunk Lotus leaned against the bed and looked at the sorry looking Mo Qian Yuan, thinking that his life had been one sad story. Even a person as savage as Drunk Lotus, could not help but feel a tinge of pity for him.

His biological father had killed Mo Qian Yuan’s mother and

massacred the maternal side of his family, and the accursed father had then colluded with Mo Qian Yuan's step brother to poison him. He suffered untold hardships before he fortunately met Jun Wu Xie. His bad fortune had barely just turned when he ascended to the throne, and the insidious Qing Yun Clan came..... Could he be cursed?

“Zip it.” Jun Wu Xie chided. Mo Qian Yuan's injuries were very severe and she had a lot on her hands. She did not need a flower's or a beast's incessant chattering around.

If time had permitted her to, she would have jabbed them on their mute acupuncture point.

The black beast and Drunk Lotus quietened down and watched Jun Wu Xie work. It seemed that Jun Wu Xie was determined to save Mo Qian Yuan.

Jun Wu Xie did not stop tending to Mo Qian Yuan, as though the gods had imbued their strength in her, her pair of snowy white hands moved with speed and skill, and the silver needles flew and weaved in the air.

First, purge the poison within, and use blood replenishing elixirs for his loss of blood, coupled with warm water to hydrate the body, and stabilise his vitalities. Thereafter, repair and mend the veins, arteries and broken bones. Leave the external wounds alone for now and push that task to the last.....

The whole procedure and process of the treatment, formed up in her mind, in seconds.....

Chapter 243: “Revival (2)”

The revival proceeded systematically and thoroughly, just as Jun Wu Xie had done in her previous life in her countless battles with Death himself. At that moment, Jun Wu Xie’s mind, could afford nothing else but calm.

Purging the poison gradually through the letting out of blood, Jun Wu Xie watched intently with her cold eyes and timed it meticulously to feed Mo Qian Yuan with a blood replenishing elixir, mixed with a little warm water to aid absorption. With Mo Qian Yuan’s severely weakened condition, Jun Wu Xie was careful not to overcompensate with the replenishment of blood, to avoid the slowed down functions of the body in its current weakened state being unable to tolerate any overindulgent replenishment, which will instead result in spreading the poison deeper with the increased blood flow.

The poison tinged blood within Mo Qian Yuan was slowly purged as it dripped from the needles. The bed sheets under him had turned a dark shade of red, and a pungent smell permeated the air.

When the blood that dripped from the silver needles was noticed to have turned a brighter shade of red, Jun Wu Xie began to feed larger quantities of the blood replenishing elixirs, but maintained Mo Qian Yuan’s intake of water, and was to be fed to him intermittently.

Mo Qian Yuan had been motionless on the bed, and his bones which were broken in numerous places did not allow him to be moved much. After Jun Wu Xie stabilised the condition and restored the functions of his various organs, she started immediately on the severed tendons of Mo Qian Yuan’s limbs. The cuts had reached to the bone and was visible through the ghastly open wound. Jun Wu Xie slipped a silver needle into her hands and threaded a line finer than hair through it. The line was so fine that it appeared translucent, and Jun Wu Xie’s hands worked her magic

as they weaved through the air, sewing the tendons back together.

That was the first time Drunk Lotus had seen someone who was capable of sewing together severed tendons. His eyes widened, as he watched in amazement, at the unfathomable medical skills his own Mistress possessed.

Jun Wu Xie's hands moved quickly and steadily and the tendons were speedily sewn together. She changed to a different needle next and worked on the flesh wounds.

Seeing Jun Wu Xie work, Mo Qian Yuan, a real live human, seemed to have been turned into a rag doll. Sew and patch, a simple procedure, but it gradually brought life back to Mo Qian Yuan who had been teetering at Death's door.

First the organs, next the arteries and veins, then the broken bones.

After Jun Wu Xie had sewn up all the wounds on Mo Qian Yuan, she heaped a quick healing salve generously over them to soothe and close the wounds. The frightful red bloody wounds visibly reduced in swelling and soreness quickly as Jun Wu Xie proceeded to aggressively secure splints all over Mo Qian Yuan's body, to allow the bones which had all been properly aligned to heal and mend properly.

It had taken her half a day, and Jun Wu Xie had fought tooth and nail against the persistent Death that had hovered over Mo Qian Yuan every second. The sun peeked from behind the western peaks before Jun Wu Xie finally stepped away from the bed.

And looking at Mo Qian Yuan, although he was still rather pale, but his breathing had grown stronger. But he was practically bandaged from head to toe and the tightly bound splints were secured all over his body which still made for a pitiful sight.

"Call in the guards at the door." Jun Wu Xie's said with a rather pale face herself as she threw herself carelessly into a chair at the

side. Her bottom had just touched the seat when a teacup overflowing with an aromatic fragrance appeared before her eyes.

She raised her head slightly, and looked into the bemused eyes of Jun Wu Yao. She stiffly accepted the proffered tea from Jun Wu Yao and lowered her head to take a sip, to moisten her dry parched throat.

Jun Wu Xie felt she had not taken that long to revive Mo Qian Yuan. In her previous life, she had ever stood three whole days at the operating table without any shuteye over consecutive surgeries, and she had needed to be carried out of the operating theatre.

When she embarks on treatment, her body forgets lethargy. As long as she stood before the target she decides to save, she transforms into an eerily calm and composed, unfeeling healing machine.

Chapter 244: “Revival (3)”

Drunk Lotus immediately fetched the two palace guards that stood outside the doors into the chambers. The moment they stepped inside, they were shocked as the heavy pungent smell of blood assaulted them. They had seen the black beast carry the terribly injured Emperor into the chambers upon its back. And when they smelled the blood, their minds had blanked out, afraid to carry on along that trail of thought.

“For the next two days, take good care of the Emperor. Let him drink a cup of warm water every hour.....” Jun Wu Xie placed a few bottles of elixir bottles on the table and gave very specific instructions on how each and every one was to be administered. Mo Qian Yuan’s condition had already stabilised and he was currently still unconscious. Hence, he will need people with him to cater to his needs.

And Jun Wu Xie had decided she would not be the one to do it.

The two palace guards listened haltingly and were hesitant to ask too many questions. They took every word that Jun Wu Xie said and deeply engraved them into their brains, taking utmost care not to forget a single thing.

After she had left her instructions with them, Jun Wu Xie left Mo Qian Yuan’s living chambers at once, the overpowering stench of blood, did not sit well with her.

Only after Jun Wu Xie and everyone else had left the Emperor’s living chambers, did the two guards make their way to Mo Qian Yuan’s bedside. The sight that met their eyes, shocked them so much that they almost stumbled over their own feet when they reeled from the shock.

The Emperor was all wrapped up with bandages and lying on blood soaked sheets. If his chest did not rise and fall as he breathed, the two guards would have assumed the person on the

bed to be dead.

In fact, when they had first seen Mo Qian Yuan upon the black beast's back when they had returned, the guards had drawn their own conclusions then. They had thought the Emperor..... The demise of the Emperor was about to happen!

And they were surprised to see that his breathing had gotten so much stronger, and did not look like a person that was about to die. Although he looked rather..... tragic.

The two guards were puzzled. The Young Miss of the Jun Family had only entered with two men whom they were unfamiliar with, and they had not seen Jun Wu Xie summon for any of the Imperial Doctors to come forth to provide any treatments. How did they manage to revive the Emperor, in just half a day?

Could it be..... Among the two strange men, one of them was a miracle physician?

The two guards limited their assumptions only to Jun Wu Yao and Drunk Lotus, and did not even consider in the slightest, that the one who had brought Mo Qian Yuan back to life, was none other than Jun Wu Xie!

Jun Wu Xie had wanted to hurry back to the Lin Palace to have an early rest, but she was just about to walk pass the doors of the Imperial main hall when she saw a group of court officials who had waited outside, look at her with disconcerting eyes.

Those court officials had arrived to attend the morning court, but they were driven out by the Qing Yun Clan delegates who barged into the main hall. They were no match for the Qing Yun Clan, but were worried for the Emperor as well. The only thing they could do was to wait outside the main hall, and pray that their Emperor steps out safely through those doors.

But the wait outside had only made them hear a series of blood curling screams .

When Jun Wu Xie had executed the many lackeys of the former Emperor before the Imperial Palace gates, she had cleansed the Qi Kingdom of about half the number of their court officials in court. Those that remained had consisted mainly of officials that were genuinely loyal to the Qi Kingdom. After Mo Qian Yuan ascended the throne, he abolished the privilege of nobility in holding official posts and widely accepted talents from humble backgrounds. Many capable young officials who were previously ostracised due to their lowly births were promoted as well and Mo Qian Yuan won their undying loyalty and unwavering support. These people were now gathered here outside the main hall.

As they stood outside the main hall, they had heard clearly the cries of their beloved ruler, heard the unbridled arrogance of the Qing Yun Clan, and wish they could take the place of their monarch.

Their hatred for the Qing Yun Clan had them seething, but they had been helpless and their inability had cut at their hearts as the screams continued.

And Jun Wu Xie's arrival had turned things around, saving them from their despair.

Chapter 245: “Awkward (1)”

They had earlier seen the group led by Jun Wu Xie bursting into the Imperial main hall and watched them kill the Qing Yun Clan delegates one after another, and the officials had all stood gaping, in awe of Jun Wu Xie.

When Jun Wu Xie was passing the doors of the main hall enroute to the Lin Palace, an old man with a head of white hair stepped up to her and stared intensely at Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie frowned, and stopped in her tracks. She recognized the old man. Including Mo Qian Yuan’s generation, he had already served three generations of the Imperial Family of the Qi Kingdom. He had been mediocre, and did not strive nor contest, and had been single mindedly upright. That was the reason he had held a mediocre rank that was neither high nor low, even after having served three generations of the Imperial Family. Mo Qian Yuan had considered the old man’s long service and undying loyalty to the Imperial Family and promoted him when he ascended the throne, or he would still have remained a leisurely minor administrative official.

The old man did not possess great capabilities, but his age and his long history in court had won him quite a bit of respect in the Imperial court. He was not known to be tactful with his words and even Mo Qian Yuan had choked on his blunt speech several times in court.

The old man was currently approaching Jun Wu Xie. Currently, she was too tired and was not prepared to hear his nagging.

But before Jun Wu Xie could show her impatience with the situation, the old official had sunk to his knees suddenly before her. His sudden action had taken Jun Wu Xie by surprise.

After the old man knelt before her, the group of officials behind him all knelt in uniform.

When Jun Wu Xie had carried out her massacre before the Imperial Palace gates earlier, although her actions had been rational and she had a good reason to do it, many officials in the Qi Kingdom had felt a little uncomfortable with her. Even after Mo Qian Yuan's ascension to the throne, they still felt that the Young Miss of the Lin Palace had been too vicious and was not someone easy to get along with.

Today's events had changed their minds totally, and they saw the good intentions of Jun Wu Xie.

If Jun Wu Xie had not been vicious and merciless, the Qing Yun Clan would have thrashed the prestige and reputation of the Qi Kingdom.

For these officials who always preached on morals and ethics, they could only stand outside the main hall helpless, while they were forced to watch their beloved ruler thus trampled and tortured. The shame had been almost too much for them to take.

The kingdom might be small, but its spirit must grow.

If the Qing Yun Clan had been allowed to carry on with their atrocities, Mo Qian Yuan would not have survived the attack. If the pillar of the kingdom was to be broken, they would not be able to face their ancestors.

The officials knelt before Jun Wu Xie, disregarding their ranks and positions, and thanked Jun Wu Xie in the only way that they knew.

They realised being vicious had its good points as well, as that might be just what the Qi Kingdom had been lacking, and remained a tiny and inconspicuous kingdom.

Jun Wu Xie hesitated a moment, before she understood their intentions. She frowned as she looked upon the officials and said: "I only did what I had to do, there is no need to thank me." She quickly turned away and left, ignoring the officials behind her.

Jun Wu Yao glanced at the group of officials and quickened his steps to catch up to Jun Wu Xie and his sharp eyes caught something really interesting to him.

The cute little ears on Jun Wu Xie, who had walked off in a hurry, had turned suspiciously red.

Having noticed that on Jun Wu Xie, Jun Wu Yao thought his little darling was just too cute. Her personality just did not know how to respond to a whole bunch of senior officials who were as old as her grandfather, who showed their gratitude in such an overwhelming manner.

She was not very honest with herself and her bright red ears had betrayed her inner feelings. How adorable was she? His lips curled up as he followed her from behind.

Chapter 246: “Awkward (2)”

Jun Wu Xie hurried back to the Lin Palace, where Jun Xian and Jun Qing had been waiting anxiously. They sighed in relief when Jun Wu Xie stepped in and Jun Qing had wanted to go up to her and ask about the situation at the Imperial Palace when Jun Xian held him back by the wrist, and said to Jun Wu Xie instead: “It’s getting late, go wash up and get some rest. Everything else can wait till tomorrow.”

Jun Wu Xie hesitated before she nodded silently. She hated looking like such a mess and all she wanted now was to go soak herself in a comforting warm bath and rid herself thoroughly of the blood and it’s awful stench.

“Father.....” Jun Qing looked at Jun Xian in puzzlement.

Jun Xian shook his head slightly and said: “Didn’t you see how exhausted she looked?”

Jun Qing thought back and realised that Jun Wu Xie had looked to be fine, but her face had been rather pale.

“Poor child, she must have strained herself. Since she returned safely, things at the Imperial Palace should be fine now. Let her rest up first. We can ask her tomorrow.” Jun Xian sighed heavily. A young girl of fourteen, should be the age when she could enjoy her youth without a care in the world, but Jun Wu Xie did not have the chance to do that.

He had been comforted by his granddaughter’s maturity and strength, but Jun Xian’s heart ached when he saw how Jun Wu Xie laboured.

“I have been too anxious, I get the servants to prepare some warm food and send them to Wu Xie.” Jun Qing realised he had been insensitive and left to get the servants.

When Jun Wu Xie got back to her room, the bath was already

drawn and ready. She slipped out of her clothes and soaked blissfully into the comforting warm water, and her tensed muscles all over her body finally relaxed.

She had just broken through her ring spirit to the orange level, before she waded through two consecutive battles, and worked tirelessly on a severely injured..... The day's events had really tired her out good.....

The black beast morphed back into its little black cat form and deftly pulled out a robe from the wardrobe with its tiny mouth and slung it over the screen. Drunk Lotus had wanted to go in but was thwarted by the little cat. He had finished the Jade Moon and the intoxicating effects of the alcohol was fading and he turned back into Little Lotus. At the sight of little black cat's drawn sharp claws, he tottered sobbing over to the lotus pond to soak himself in misery by his own lonesome self.

The little black cat then turned around to talk to Jun Wu Xie, but to its dismay, its eyes were confronted by the towering form of Jun Wu Yao standing at the doorway to the bath and it froze in midstep.

Jun Wu Yao walked soundlessly over to the wooden tub and looked at Jun Wu Xie who laid within, her eyes closed. The corners of his mouth raised as he stood behind the tub and his long slender fingers closed over the soft shoulders of Jun Wu Xie, and kneaded gently on the knots within the tense muscles on her shoulders.

It could have been because of the trials throughout the day, or the release of tension from Jun Wu Yao's comforting massage, but Jun Wu Xie slipped defenceless into a deep slumber within the warm water that covered her in the tub, her head slumped on one side, resting on the hand of Jun Wu Yao.

The fragrance of the bath water and the misty air formed from the warmth in the room wafted around the nose of Jun Wu Yao as he breathed deeply and his hands kneaded the soft skin of Jun Wu

Xie's shoulders, and it spread a warmth that enveloped his heart that made it beat a little faster.

The little black cat stared in trepidation upon the back of Jun Wu Yao, unable to decide whether to move or remain still.

Helplessly, it made up its mind, determined and with unwavering conviction. If Jun Wu Yao was to make any of his obnoxious moves, to defend the innocence of its mistress, it will..... will..... definitely wake its mistress up!!

But to its relief, the little cat's obnoxious scenes that went through its mind did not come into being. Jun Wu Yao had noticed that the temperature of the bath water had dropped and tugged at the robe slung upon the screen. He had lifted Jun Wu Xie with a single hand out of the tub and carefully wrapped the robe around her, before carrying her over and setting her down gently onto her soft bed.

And there had been no further advances made after that.

The little black cat's tensed nerves relaxed and hid under the table in shame when it realised its own imagined thoughts had been only its own.

The little black cat brushed them all away and thought seriously. Had the devil himself changed? A devil that became such a gentleman?

Chapter 247: “Unspoken Intentions (1)”

Early the next morning, Jun Wu Xie woke up to find herself wrapped up snugly in a robe that had kept her warm throughout the night, while searching her mind in futility for any memory of having climbed into bed.

During breakfast, the Jun Family of three generations had sat together at the table, but Jun Wu Yao had as usual made a short appearance and disappeared again.

Over breakfast, Jun Wu Xie had related yesterday's events at the Imperial Palace simply to the Jun father and son, and when she finished, she had not reacted to their astounded faces and had proceeded to lower her head and sip at her cup of tea.

“Did you say that His Majesty is currently still bedridden and immobile in the Imperial Palace? And you had just left Qin Yu Yan in the Imperial main hall?” Jun Qing almost had a seizure at the methods his beloved niece had employed and at the callous way she had treated the Emperor of Qi! He knew deep down that Mo Qian Yuan, who was the ruler of the kingdom, did not put up any pretentious fronts with Jun Wu Xie, but at such a time when his life was at risk, Jun Wu Xie had abandoned the Emperor as he laid barely alive in his chambers without even summoning for a single Imperial Doctor and just carelessly thrown the responsibility of caring for the Emperor to two palace guards. That was done a little too..... haphazardly, isn't it?

And as for the Eldest Miss of the Qing Yun Clan, Jun Wu Xie had brazenly just left her locked in the Imperial main hall. Mo Qian Yuan might not be able to attend court, but that was just too reckless.

Jun Wu Xie did not see that she had done anything inappropriate.

“Mo Qian Yuan will live, and Qin Yu Yan will not die in the next

few days.” Jun Wu Xie assured her uncle.

“.....” Jun Qing threw up his hands in surrender.

“Till when do you intend to keep Qin Yu Yan there? You can’t seal the Imperial Court forever right?”

“I will make Bai Yun Xian thrown her into the dungeons later today.” There was an Emperor in there anyway, an additional Miss would not make much of a difference. As she sipped the last of her tea, Jun Wu Xie finally felt ready to discuss in detail with her grandfather and uncle.

“Qin Yu Yan will die soon, so do not worry for the dead. There is another matter, that I need to talk to both of you about.”

Jun Xian and Jun Qing exchanged a tired knowing glance and waited for Jun Wu Xie to go on.

“I intend to go to the Qing Yun Clan.” Jun Wu Xie said those shockingly disturbing words calmly.

“WHAT?”

“PREPOSTEROUS!”

Watching the looks of disapproval on the two people closest to her, Jun Wu Xie bit on her lip, thinking how she can explain the rationale behind the trip.

For what the Qing Yun Clan had put the Jun Family through, Jun Wu Xie was not prepared to forgive, and had killed the delegation sent to Qi. But the mastermind was still sitting atop the Qing Yun Clan, oblivious to the fact that his daughter, an Elder, and various disciples had been killed. When the news reaches him, the Qing Yun Clan will declare war on Qi and their tiny kingdom will not be able to stand up to them.

To catch the enemy unprepared, taking advantage of the first strike, or be prepared to receive the full brunt of their retaliation. She did not need Mo Qian Yuan to learn the same lesson again.

Besides that, Jun Wu Xie had another reason to go to the Qing Yun Clan.

It was the Soul Calming Jade!

The Qing Yun Clan having mobilised so much of their resources to get their hands on the Soul Calming Jade must have had a good reason to do so. Little Lotus had recognized the Soul Jade to be the Soul Calming Jade from the spiritual world, but had not been able to provide any further information about it. Jun Wu Xie had the nagging feeling that the Soul Calming Jade could bring her father back to life and that was what gave her the other reason to go to the Qing Yun Clan. To gather more information on the Soul Calming Jade.

She did not intend to reveal the second reason to the Jun Family's father and son. It was just her intuition and she did not want to give them false hope, and subject them to uncalled for despair in the end.

Jun Wu Xie had only told them that they needed to catch their enemies unawares and they had already reacted so strongly. She did not want to imagine their reaction if she had shared her guess on the capabilities of the Soul Calming Jade.

The Jun Family's father and son were aware of what Jun Wu Xie was capable of achieving when she puts her mind to it. But her intention was to the on the Qing Yun Clan! The top and the mightiest clan throughout the lands!

Would she really take down and obliterate Qing Yun Clan from the face of these lands?

Chapter 248: “Unspoken Intentions (2)”

Thinking back on it, Jun Wu Xie’s plan was not without its merits. They had killed the delegation from the Qing Yun Clan that had included the daughter of the Qing Yun Clan’s Sovereign. If the Qing Yun Clan got wind of it, they would come down hard, raining untold wrath upon the tiny kingdom of Qi.

If they wait till the Qing Yun Clan stirred and commenced their retaliation against Qi, their position would become much more precarious to the dangers that lay ahead.

The Qing Yun Clan’s might laid not only in their disciples, but was greatly amplified by the various powers and countries that stood behind them. If the Qing Yun Clan mobilized everything they could, not even tens of Qi Kingdoms could hope to stand against that mightiest of armies.

“Wu Xie, I know you are a very capable girl. But heading off to the Qing Yun Clan is really too big a risk to take.” Jun Xian sighed, things keep coming at them one after another, and peace never stayed long enough for them to catch their breaths.

“Rest assured Grandfather, I have thought it through. I will not face them head on, and moreover, my teacher will be with me! He will help me through.” Jun Wu Xie had been left with no choice but to bring her made up teacher into the picture which made Jun Xian a little less worried.

“Moreover, there is no way we can avoid them anymore. I’ll rather take my chances to strike at them first, without them knowing, than have the Qing Yun Clan find out, and have us persecuted, and we have to run for our lives.”

“Wu Xie, this is a grave matter. If anything happens to you, you must not hide it from us.” Jun Qing reminded her, his heart full of unease.

Jun Wu Xie nodded in agreement.

The trip to the Qing Yun Clan, would take a few months at least. It would be impossible for her to disappear for months under the watchful eyes of her grandfather and uncle, hence, she had decided to tell them the truth. Making use of her make believe teacher, Jun Wu Xie had convinced them somewhat.

That afternoon, Jun Wu Xie made her way to the Imperial Palace. Qin Yu Yan who had been left in the Imperial main hall had already slipped into semi consciousness and she had looked utterly terrible, the whites of her eyes showing, and convulsions racked her body.

Bai Yun Xian saw Jun Wu Xie approach and stepped to one side of the hall to get out of the way as she watched the guards drag Qin Yu Yan out of the main hall and a whole bunch of palace maids and eunuchs rushing in to clean up the bloody and gory mess splattered all over the place, without missing a spot.

“Come with me.” Jun Wu Xie glanced at Bai Yun Xian, and she led the way towards the previous Crown Prince Palace.

The palace had been “loaned” to Mo Xuan Fei for his “temporary stay”. With the passing of Mo Xuan Fei, the place had regained its peace and tranquility.

Bai Yun Xian followed behind Jun Wu Xie quietly, not daring to utter a single word, and she just hurried along with her head lowered.

Jun Wu Xie sat down when she reached the palace and looked at the nervous Bai Yun Xian and said: “I want to know everything about the Qing Yun Clan.”

Bai Yun Xian raised her head in puzzlement, and she looked at Jun Wu Xie.

Although Jun Wu Xie had not said anything, she could make a rather good guess at Jun Wu Xie’s intentions.

The young girl's great mind had been meticulous in her plans and left nothing to chance. When she had decided on killing the entire delegation sent by the Qing Yun Clan, she must have already set her sight on the whole Qing Yun Clan itself.

She knew that the Qing Yun Clan was not known for the benevolence and mercy, and would not spare her or the Qi Kingdom, hence, she had decided to strike at the Qing Yun Clan first?

Having guessed so much of Jun Wu Xie's intentions, Bai Yun Xian was feeling rather uneasy about it. She needs to take her antidote every three days, and if Jun Wu Xie went to the Qing Yun Clan, what was to happen to her?

“What I have here is the antidote, enough to last you through the next six months. I will hand them over to my uncle. And after I leave, he will send someone to deliver the medicine to you every three days. While I'm away, you will have to stay in the Imperial Palace.” Jun Wu Xie said, as if reading Bai Yun Xian mind. Jun Wu Xie then produced a porcelain bottle and opened the stopper gently, letting out the familiar fragrance of the antidote contained within.

Chapter 249: “Unspoken Intentions (3)”

With Jun Wu Xie’s assurance, Bai Yun Xian sighed in relief. She had already cut her ties completely with the Qing Yun Clan. Anyone with half a brain would be able to think that Bai Yun Xian had been in cahoots with Jun Wu Xie to bring about the deaths of Qin Yu Yan and the other members of her delegation. There was no way for her to return to the Qing Yun Clan anymore.

Over the days, Bai Yun Xian had come to realise from her observation of Jun Wu Xie’s manner of handling things. She found that as long as she did not go against Jun Wu Xie’s wishes, her life can still be rather peaceful.

Besides the poison within her, Bai Yun Xian did not find her life in the Imperial Palace to be lacking, and could be somewhat fulfilling.

With nowhere else she could go, she had learnt to be content.

“There are twelve peaks within the Qing Yun Clan’s control, with the main peak under the command of the Sovereign, the other eleven peaks were overseen by an Elder each. It was said, every peak specialised in a different area of expertise. Among them, the Elder of Cloud Treading Peak was the youngest among all, and he was the son of the previous Sovereign. The current Sovereign was not of the same family tree, but was a direct disciple under the previous Sovereign. Nobody knew how the leadership of the Qing Yun Clan fell into the hands of the disciple, but it was known that the current Sovereign did not get along well with the Elder of Cloud Treading Peak. The residual support for the former Sovereign had remained significant and the Sovereign had had his hands tied. But in recent years, the Sovereign had secretly moved to remove many of those supporters and the Elder of the Cloud Treading Peak was in a bleak situation. If my Miss intention is to go to the Qing Yun Clan, the Cloud Treading Peak would be a good place to start from and the Cloud Treading Peak’s Elder’s name is

Mu Chen. The Qing Yun Clan opens their doors to recruit talents every month, and with my Miss' extraordinary talents in medicine, it would be a breeze for you to slip into the Qing Yun Clan as a new recruit."

Since Bai Yun Xian had decided to switch to Jun Wu Xie's side, she had provided Jun Wu Xie with all the information and every single detail she knew about and hid nothing from her. She had in fact secretly hoped that Jun Wu Xie would be able to totally annihilate the whole of the Qing Yun Clan to prevent any acts of revenge against her in the future.

Jun Wu Xie nodded her head slightly, seemingly satisfied with Bai Yun Xian's detailed and informative narration.

Selfish people are the easiest to manipulate. As long as you hold their lives in your hands, they were extremely cooperative when you need them.

Jun Wu Xie had kept Bai Yun Xian alive, was to use this well of information against the Qing Yun Clan.

Seeing that Jun Wu Xie was satisfied, Bai Yun Xian was feeling encouraged, and she further squeezed every single bit of information she had on the Qing Yun Clan, selling them out thoroughly, saying everything she knew and hiding nothing.

The strongest among them would be the Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan itself, named Qin Yue, and he had broken through his spirit to the indigo level. Besides the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan, there were some permanent residents who stayed on as guest officers. These people command an indigo level spirit as well. They usually stayed hidden unless someone stirred up trouble within the Qing Yun Clan's premises, where they would appear and rid the Qing Yun Clan of the trouble.

The Qing Yun Clan opened their doors for the recruitment every month only for a day, and people with outstanding talents in Medicine apply to join the Qing Yun Clan then. If they pass the

tests set, they are admitted to the Outer House to study Medicine. The elite can progress in their second year to be admitted to the Inner House to study the Qing Yun Clan's own unique practice of medicine. If they were lucky, and got selected by any of the Elders or the Sovereign of the twelve peaks themselves, they would be instantly promoted and be directly admitted into the Inner House to practice and develop themselves.

Jun Wu Xie had no intentions of wasting a year of her time at the Qing Yun Clan. At three months the most, she wanted the Qing Yun Clan to disappear from the face of the world!

“Which day monthly?” Jun Wu Xie asked.

Bai Yun Xian answered without hesitation: “The fifteenth of every month would be the day they open their doors to receive talented disciples.”

Jun Wu Xie nodded as she contemplated.

Bai Yun Xian thought of something suddenly and her expression grew grave: “There is one thing, and I would ask my Miss to remember it.”

Jun Wu Xie frowned.

“Among the twelve peaks, there is one named Hidden Cloud Peak, and its Elder is named Ke Cang Ju. The Hidden Cloud Peak portrays itself to specialise in the research of herbs, but in actual fact, they research more along the lines of poisons. The Hidden Cloud Peak had always set the lowest threshold for the acceptance of their disciples, and they had always accepted the biggest number of them. But..... those disciples had also always ended up dead for no rhyme or reason.” Bai Yun Xian said gravely.

Chapter 250: “The Way of an Emperor (1)”

“If my Miss was to go to the Qing Yun Clan, you must make sure, not to go to the Hidden Cloud Peak.” Bai Yun Xian cautioned carefully. Disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak had always disappeared mysteriously or were found dead for no reason. It was a fact not known to people outside of the Qing Yun Clan, but many who did not possess the capabilities to be accepted as a disciple were surreptitiously personally accepted by Ke Cang Ju and brought into the Hidden Cloud Peak. Those people had always thought that it was a god given opportunity, but little did they know that they had just put a foot forward into Death’s door.

“Tell me more about Ke Cang Ju.” Jun Wu Xie had decided that the Qing Yun Clan was a place that was anything but open and aboveboard. Anyone that could produce a disciple like Bai Yun Xian and fathered a daughter like Qin Yu Yan, could not possibly be anything but abominable as the Qing Yun Clan’s Sovereign.

“Ke Cang Ju was not originally of the Qing Yun Clan. He was brought into the Qing Yun Clan after Qin Yue was named the Sovereign, and rose up the ranks within a few years to the position of an Elder.” Bai Yun Xian replied honestly. “I do not know of Ke Cang Ju’s real identity, but only of his gloomy personality, as he’s not often seen within the Qing Yun Clan. His Hidden Cloud Peak was closed off to the other disciples and even if Qing Yue were to go there, he had to inform Ke Cang Ju of his intention beforehand.”

Jun Wu Xie paid note to the mysterious circumstances surrounding this person and listened on to Bai Yun Xian’s narration of her knowledge of the Qing Yun Clan for a little longer before she dismissed Bai Yun Xian and proceeded to Mo Qian Yuan’s chambers.

Having been unconscious for a whole night, Mo Qian Yuan had regained consciousness. But the pain that still lingered all over

continued to torment him. He was bandaged from head to toe and even sitting up became a wish that cannot be fulfilled.

When Jun Wu Xie stepped into the chambers, she saw the two palace guards that she had summoned yesterday standing on each side of the bed, with one holding a teapot, and the other holding on to a tray filled with medicine bottles, their faces gaunt, obviously from a lack of sleep.

“Miss Jun.” The two guards hurriedly fell to their knees when they saw Jun Wu Xie approach.

“Leave.” Jun Wu Xie said coldly.

The two guards scrambled out without hesitation, not forgetting to leave the things in their hands behind.

“You’re here.....” Mo Qian Yuan could not move, and could only move his eyes to try to see Jun Wu Xie.

“Has your mind been cleared?” Jun Wu Xie did not check on Mo Qian Yuan’s wounds but sat down on a chair by the side.

Mo Qian Yuan laughed bitterly, but it tore at the wounds on his face and his expression contorted in agony.

“It couldn’t be any clearer now. Don’t you think I asked for it myself?” If he had not tried to dissuade Jun Wu Xie, he would not have been put through the agony. Had he not been blind to the true nature of the mightiest clan across the lands, thinking they were reasonable and understanding, he would not have realised that they were in fact just a bunch of merciless and unfeeling beasts.

Without any signs of a reply from Jun Wu Xie, Mo Qian Yuan, despite himself, carried on with his monologue.

“I have been really dumb, or I would not be in this state, and had needed you to save me umpteen times. When I was small, my mother, the Empress, had always told me, it is man’s nature to be kind. However fiendish a man was, he possessed a kind side.

Treating people with a genuine heart will gain you an equal reciprocation in return. I had believed her to be right all this time, but the recent events had shown me that my mother could have been wrong right from the start. She had treated that man so well, and suppressed the jealousy in her heart, and overseen the six palaces, only wishing for peace and stability within the Imperial harem. No matter whichever concubine that man had favoured at anytime, she had met them only with smiles, never harming a single one of them, to support and assist that man to become a brilliant ruler of the generation. She swallowed the whispered sweet nothings of promises, and would never have thought till the day she was murdered, that her whole life's efforts for him and her whole family would finally be destroyed by the hand of that very man." Mo Qian Yuan's voice sounded choked up, hiding the bitterness that welled up within.

Chapter 251: “The Way of an Emperor (2)”

“When I was small, I had always thought my father and my mother enjoyed matrimonial harmony. Even though that man was surrounded by beauties all the time, he had treated my mother civilly and with respect – that was before I had learnt the lying nature of that man. Things became much clearer after my mother died, my maternal family massacred, and the few that remained of the once prosperous family were banished to the borderlands. It was ironic that only when things had unfolded to that extent, while I was imprisoned in my lavish cage of a palace, and slowly given chronic poison that things were painfully simple that I had trusted the wrong person. I had hated him then, and I had the notion that I had ridden myself of the so called benevolence.”

“But it has been proven now, I am still a fool. Jun Wu Xie, I owe you so... so much. Too much that I will not be able to repay you adequately in this life. My life, henceforth, is yours. Whatever you say, whatever you do, I will never again raise any objection against you.” Mo Qian Yuan was now clearly aware that, to be compassionate to your enemies, was just be being cruel to yourself.

He’s had enough of the cruelty inflicted on himself. No longer is he going to be the easy target he had always made himself to be, and he refused to just wait for rescue from others from the plights he had gotten got himself into.

Only when Mo Qian Yuan had spoken himself hoarse, did Jun Wu Xie finally decide to grace him with a reply.

“I do not want your life. And neither should the Emperor of the entire Qi Kingdom need to listen to me.”

Mo Qian Yuan had wanted to retort, but his dry parched throat did not allow him to squeeze a single word out.

“The whole of the Qi Kingdom lies within your hands, what you want to do should not come from anyone’s orders, but you need to

learn the way to be an Emperor. With the recent brush with the Qing Yun Clan, I believe you already know what you should do, and what you shouldn't do. I will be away next month. It might take me three months at least, or six months at most before I return and I will leave Bai Yun Xian behind. She is not trustworthy, but her skills in medicine are many times better than all your Royal Doctors. I will leave the antidote for her with my uncle, and the recipe with you. To transform Bai Yun Xian into someone useful to you, will be the task I assign to you." Jun Wu Xie said without any expression.

She had no intention to kill Bai Yun Xian any longer. Jun Wu Xie could not be bothered to and she had to make preparations to depart from Qi. The skills of the doctors in Qi were laughable, and though Bai Yun Xian's skills when compared to hers, were insignificant, but if compared to all the doctors in Qi, Bai Yun Xian surpassed them by leaps and bounds.

It can be said, keeping Bai Yun Xian around, would be akin to keeping a double edged sword. Whether Mo Qian Yuan could forge the sword to fit within his hand, would prove whether this Emperor was capable.

The Emperor of the Qi Kingdom was named Mo, and not Jun!

She had finished what she came to say and Jun Wu Xie proceeded to check on Mo Qian Yuan's injuries. Mo Qian Yuan had a lot he wanted to say to Jun Wu Xie, and to ask where she was going. But upon seeing Jun Wu Xie's cold expression, he swallowed all his words and clamped his mouth shut.

Jun Wu Xie wanted him to learn to be independant, and he did not want to betray that trust.

Mo Qian Yuan had been very severely injured this time. It was fortunate he had consumed the seed of the Snow Lotus previously, and that had shielded his body a little. With the addition of Jun Wu Xie's generous heaps of precious rare elixirs, his life was finally

saved.

Under Jun Wu Xie's miraculous healing hands, it was expected that Mo Qian Yuan would not suffer any residual side effects when he recovered, but the pain and agony to be suffered on his road to recovery was nevertheless unavoidable.

Over the period that Mo Qian Yuan was bedridden, the court officials were exempted from attending court. Without having to attend court, the various court officials found a new place to haunt.....

The Lin Palace.

Ever since Jun Wu Xie led the charge into the Imperial Palace to rescue Mo Qian Yuan, a whole bunch of stubborn and unyielding old court officials suddenly saw Jun Wu Xie in a good light, and the usually shunned Lin Palace to avoid sparking off any rumours of collusion, suddenly became a highlight for them to visit in the course of their daily routines!

Chapter 252: “Preparations”

These few days, Jun Xian had been suffering from headaches for a different reason. The Lin Palace was not accustomed to mixing with officials of the Imperial Court. Military generals had shunned them to avoid gossip and Jun Xian could not stand the endless gabbing of the literary officials.

But over the course of the past few days, all the court officials, be it military or literary, had seemingly all agreed to come visit the Lin Palace daily. As they stepped in with their smiles in full bloom, all their conversations led to queries on Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Xian had initially been clueless on their various unannounced visits. But as all the conversations tended to fall upon the topic of his granddaughter, it finally dawned on Jun Xian.

These court officials all had their eyes set on his Wu Xie, and had all come to propose a betrothal!

Jun Wu Xie's reputation in the Qi Kingdom had previously been so bad that it couldn't have gotten any worse. She was wilful and unruly, and the addition of her dalliance with the previous Second Prince, Mo Xuan Fei had many of the court officials deemed a disgrace. Even when the newly crowned Emperor had heaped loads of praise upon Jun Wu Xie, it had not been enough to change the perception that the court officials had for Jun Wu Xie.

But! The tables seemed to have turned!

Jun Wu Xie's heroic and glorious deed of breaking into the Imperial Palace to rescue the Emperor of Qi, had spread like wildfire throughout the entire Imperial City, and the prenotions that all the court officials, be it military or literary, had of Jun Wu Xie had drastically been altered and overturned then!

The young maiden was stunningly beautiful, and possessed both

brawn and brains. She would make the perfect daughter-in-law!

Hence, any with a son or grandson in their family, started to fix their eye on the exquisite Jun Wu Xie, who had bloomed delicate as a flower and grown refined as the finest jade. If it wasn't for the prodigious prestige of the Lin Palace, the various officials might have been tempted to carry out an abduction for the marriage.

But the Lin Palace had the Rui Lin Army standing guard and that had quelled any thoughts in that direction, and they were left with the lone option of attempting to move them through emotions and have them listen to reason. They praised their own sons and grandsons to the skies, and expounded on the heroics of Jun Wu Xie, and criticised the other candidates of the competition.

It had sure been lively for the Lin Palace!

Jun Xian had been helpless against them, as he had lived never to rebuff a smiling face. When the court officials had shown up cordially, he could not make himself expel them out, and sat through the pompous spectacle patiently as they presented their plans to steal his precious granddaughter from him.

Jun Wu Xie had not been aware of this, as Jun Xian had held them off at the front yard, and any who decided to attempt to enter the premises were shown their way out firmly by Long Qi, who stood guard before the doors.

There were twenty three more days before the Qing Yun Clan opened their doors to receive the next batch of applicants to enter under their tutelage. During this period, there was not much that Jun Wu Xie had wanted to do except to prepare for her long trip.

Before she was to leave the Qi Kingdom, she wanted to ensure that there was adequate elixirs and medicine for the Lin Palace, and another frustration that bugged her was the development of her spiritual powers.

Her current development of her spiritual powers had been

wholly based on the methods shown on the ancient text to cultivate the Snow Lotus, and the cultivation of Snow Lotuses needed Jade Nectar. But it was impossible for Jun Wu Xie to lug jars and jars of Jade Nectar all the way into the Qing Yun Clan.

Without Jade Nectar, she would be unable to cultivate Snow Lotuses, and that had also meant, Jun Wu Xie would not be able to develop her spiritual powers in the months that she would be in the Qing Yun Clan.

That was not what she wanted. This was not a desirable outcome for her!

Without any other choice, Jun Wu Xie could only continue to flip through the delicate pages of ancient texts to find other plants she could cultivate to develop her spiritual powers.

But all she could find recorded within were names of plants that she had never even heard of before. It seemed that finding an alternative to develop her spiritual powers was not going to be that easy.

On the seventh day after Qin Yu Yan was imprisoned within the Royal Dungeons, Mo Qian Yuan sent word on the passing of Qin Yu Yan.

Qin Yu Yan had not expected till the end of her days, that as the Eldest Miss of the mighty Qing Yun Clan, she would die so pitifully within the dungeons of such a tiny and insignificant kingdom.

Chapter 253: “Journey”

Without any alternatives to develop her spiritual powers, Jun Wu Xie had no choice but to divert her attention to other plant life.

Her spiritual powers had been developed through the cultivation of the Snow Lotus, would the cultivation of other plant life bring about the same effects?

To prove the point, Jun Wu Xie had to experiment with planting and cultivating various types of medicinal herbs. After going through ten days of exhaustive experiments, she found that the cultivation of common plants and herbs did not provide her with any spiritual energy, and only the cultivation of rarer plants and herbs was able to give her a little bit of spiritual energy. But the speed of growth and development they provided when compared to the Snow Lotus, was absolutely negligible.

But negligible was better than none.....

There were seventeen more days till the fifteenth next month, when Jun Wu Xie waved goodbye to Jun Xian and Jun Qing and stepped onto the horse drawn carriage heading to the Qing Yun Clan's peaks. To see her off, the largely recovered Mo Qian Yuan came to the city gates and looked on cheerlessly as the Jun Family members sent Jun Wu Xie on her way out of the city.

With this parting, he did not know when he will see her again. Mo Qian Yuan was solemn as he watched the carriage slowly shrink and finally disappeared from his sight.

Within the carriage, sat a delicate and pretty youth, quietly carrying a docile little black cat in her arms.

Before she had left the Lin Palace, Jun Wu Xie had changed her appearance. She had changed herself to become the youth that had gone into Ghost City. She had only brought the little black cat, Little Lotus, and lugged a few jars of Jade Nectar onto the carriage

to allow her to continue to develop her spiritual powers throughout the journey. Before she left, she had wanted to bid Jun Wu Yao goodbye, but there had been no sign of him, and she gave up on it.

[Mistress, you're really going to that funny clanny place? To become their disciple?]

The little black cat asked as it snuggled deeper to find a comfortable position. Although it was aware of Jun Wu Xie's purpose for going to the Qing Yun Clan, the thought of its mistress having to pretend to call some quack her teacher made it feel uncomfortable nevertheless.

In this world, a teacher capable to school Jun Wu Xie in medicine had not been born yet!

“Qing Yun Clan.” Jun Wu Xie reminded.

From the intelligence from Bai Yun Xian, Jun Wu Xie had decided to set her target for this trip to the Qing Yun Clan was to be admitted to Mu Chen's Cloud Treading Peak. The enemy of her enemy would be a friend, and Jun Wu Xie did not mind having an ally.

The horse drawn carriage rumbled on further gradually, and the carriage was no longer visible from the Imperial City.

Outside the city gates, Jun Wu Yao's eyes stared fixedly at the point where the carriage had disappeared, his jet black eyes thoughtful.

A shadow formed and a man in black knelt by the foot of Jun Wu Yao, his eyes puzzled. His Lord had known that the Miss would depart on her journey today, but he had stayed hidden. Only after the Young Miss had left, he had come to stand outside the city gates for a long time. Having served His Lord till now, he knew His Lord would have wanted to accompany the Young Miss on her journey.

“Ye Sha” Jun Wu Yao called out suddenly.

“Right here.” The man in black, Ye Sha, answered promptly.

“Follow her, and protect her well.” Jun Wu Yao narrowed his eyes. If he did not still have unfinished business here, he wouldn’t have allowed his little darling to leave on her own.

“Your command will be carried out.” Ye Sha acknowledged and had expected as such.

“If she is in no danger, do not reveal your presence.” Jun Wu Yao added, his voice cold as ice.

The tiny Qing Yun Clan was an insignificant speck before his eyes. If it was only the Qing Yun Clan, he believed his little darling would be able to deal with them herself, what caused him concern was the hidden powers behind the Qing Yun Clan.

One of the palaces among the twelve, no matter which palace it was, was not something the present Jun Wu Xie could handle on her own.

Chapter 254: “Cloudy Peaks (1)”

The fifteenth of every month was the busiest time the Cloudy Peaks of the Qing Yun Clan were most lively, always bustling with activity. The Cloudy Peaks bordered a few countries but belonged to none and was independent. The Cloudy Peaks were steep and treacherous, and had a total of twelve peaks. However, there was only one lone path from the foot to the summit.

The Cloudy Peaks were revered not for their majestic peaks, but for the Qing Yun Clan occupying the entire twelve peaks!

Famed for their medical skills, the mightiest clan across the lands opened their doors to the mountains, to recruit talents who were medically inclined through a series of tests. For those who passed, they stand a chance to be admitted into the Qing Yun Clan as a disciple.

The Qing Yun Clan sat upon vast tracts of lands, had centuries of history behind them, and had exceptionally skilled Elders overseeing each peak.

There were countless sacred medical writings and records hidden within the Qing Yun Clan, and was a sacred haven for any in their pursuit of medicine. Anyone accepted into the Qing Yun Clan, had their status quickly escalated, and if they were admitted into the Inner House, their status immediately shot into the skies.

Countless people would give anything to secure a position within the Qing Yun Clan, and on the days they opened their doors for recruitment, the wide road leading towards the summit was always jam packed with people from all across the lands.

A nondescript horse carriage stopped at the foot of the mountain and a scholarly looking youth with delicate features dressed in plain and simple clothes stepped out. After a few words with the coachman, the little youth set off towards the Cloudy Peaks.

The main thoroughfare towards the Cloudy Peaks was packed with people heading into the mountains. There were all not too old in age, eighteen years of age at the most, and fourteen years at least.

The Qing Yun Clan had a hard and fast rule in their recruitment. They would only accept youths between the ages of fourteen to eighteen years. Anyone who were older than eighteen years or younger than fourteen years, no matter how prodigious, would be turned away firmly.

The rule did not seem like much to others, but Jun Wu Xie looked at it differently.

From the age of fourteen to eighteen, it was when a person underwent the most critical four years after their ring spirits are awoken. It was also the period that the youth were the muddled in consciousness and thinking on their path to maturity and adulthood. The Qing Yun Clan had wanted to recruit disciples of that age to better manage them by brainwashing and easily instilling in them the principles and philosophies of the Qing Yun Clan.

Within the bustling crowd, many youths confidently assured their family members and strode onwards, putting up a brave front.

Only the youths who were applicants themselves can go up towards to Cloudy Peaks, and their family members could only wait at the foot for news. If anyone were to breach the rule, they would be promptly thrown out by the Qing Yun Clan disciples who stood guard at the mountain's foot.

Many were also spotted pulling at their hair, their heads buried deep into medical books at the mountain's foot in a last minute's futile attempt to cram every single word in the books into their brains.

Jun Wu Xie looked indifferently, observing the various hilarious

sights around her. She could not figure out why, a clan with such mediocre skills in medicine, would attract so many people to clamour and fight just to be granted admission into the clan.

Jun Wu Xie's unperturbed calm, had also attracted the stares from many of the other nervous hopefuls. They cast their eyes upon the small youth who stood apart from the others, noticed that she was dressed in plain clothes without any adornments, and scoffed at her young age. They all then broke in sneering laughter.

"A young brat like you wants to get into the Qing Yun Clan?"

"No, he's just here to see the world. Look! Don't you see he came empty handed?"

"That's right, after you get rejected by the Qing Yun Clan, you would have at least opened your eyes to the might of the largest clan..... Sigh, I must say, the Qing Yun Clan's threshold for new recruits are too low, even the stray cats and rabid dogs have come to join in the fun." The several finely dressed youth who boasted from having come from a lineage of medical practitioners put down their books and started mocking and pointing their fingers at Jun Wu Xie, who had stuck out conspicuously.

Little did they know, the youth that they mocked at, would soon have their highly revered mightiest clan throughout the lands, smashed into oblivion.

Chapter 255: “Cloudy Peaks (2)”

Squeezed within the crowd, Jun Wu Xie frowned deeply. Having broken her spiritual powers through to the orange level had heightened her five senses. Every single mocking word fell into her ears but she ignored them all.

These children were beneath her notice.

Due to the overwhelming number of applicants, the Qing Yun Clan could not assess every single one of them individually or it would have taken them weeks. Hence, the Qing Yun Clan had prepared a simple test as the first round of screening.

It was a most basic test, identification of herbs.

At the halfway point up the mountain, two long rows of a hundred tables lined the sides of the path, and heaped upon the tables was a mess of grass, herbs and a variety of plants. Every single applicant, had five minutes to identify and pick out the herb the Qing Yun Clan had set as the question for the test from the mess.

It was not difficult to identify specific herbs, but if they were mixed up in hundreds of other kinds of herbs, it was a different level of difficulty all together.

The herbs heaped on the tables were obviously freshly picked and many still had mud clinging on their roots and none of them were whole, like they had been roughly yanked out and many had broken into pieces. The various candidates who had been brimming with confidence when they received their questions had now paled visible when they saw the weed filled tables.

To identify herbs, they must first and foremost recognise its outward shape and appearance. But the herbs in the heaps had been broken and badly ravaged, how were they expected to identify them?

The first seemingly easy test, had left a great number of applicants stumped.

For a youth in their teens, even if they had come from a line of medical practitioners, and had been exposed to herbs from a young tender age, it was impossible for them to remember and commit to memory all the different and myriad varieties, not to mention, identify and pick them out from these badly ravaged and broken tiny pieces of herbs and other plants.

The smug looks of confidence soon turned to dismay as they stared at the mess of plants before their eyes and they buried their heads deep inside trying to locate the right herb as time was fast running out.

In the meantime, Jun Wu Xie walked unhurriedly to stand before a table. When she had reached the midpoint of the mountain, the Qing Yun Clan disciples had passed her a tag indicating the name of the herb she was supposed to locate.

Identification.

To locate a commonly used herb that appeared closely similar to weeds. A few youths that had come at the same time as Jun Wu Xie received the same task and when they saw the name of the herb they were supposed to locate, their faces had lit up with joy but were now quickly replaced with a look of helplessness.

“How do they expect anyone to find it?” A sobbing youth held his tag so tight he crushed it in his hand.

With many of them scurrying around different tables in all directions, Jun Wu Xie walked past a table and grabbed at a small piece of herb just half a finger’s length and proceeded onwards without a moment’s hesitation.

A few youths who were behind her noticed that Jun Wu Xie had picked her herb quickly and was proceeding to leave, and they stood stunned watching her walk away.

Jun Wu Xie had just taken a few steps when two other youths stood before her, blocking her way. She raised her head to look at them and recognized them to be the finely dressed youths who had criticised her earlier from head to toe at the foot of the mountain.

“Move.” Jun Wu Xie said coldly.

The two youths had no intentions of letting Jun Wu Xie pass, and their eyes were locked onto the herb held within Jun Wu Xie’s hand. It was a small piece, but it was enough for them to ascertain that the piece she held was genuine.

How this the little brat manage that? They had received their tags at the same time, and in the blink of an eye, before any of them could make head or tail of the task they were given, the little brat had managed to locate the herb without thinking?

Chapter 256: “Cloudy Peaks (3)”

Was she that lucky? Or good?

The Qing Yun Clan gave them very limited time, and they did not think they could locate the named herb within that allocated period. When they saw that Jun Wu Xie had managed it, they began to have other ideas.

The brat before their eyes wore simple clothes, and did not seem to come from a rich family. This brat’s family background must be lowly.

In the eyes of the other youths who yearned to join the Qing Yun Clan, Jun Wu Xie looked to be very weak and made an extremely good target.

The Qing Yun Clan had only tasked them to locate the named herb, but did not say anything against snatching or thieving.

“Brat, hand over the herb you have in your hand to us. Since it’s so easy for you, you can just grab another one.” One of the youths eyed Jun Wu Xie with an evil smirk, intending to resort to snatching if she refused.

In fact, things like this happened at every monthly recruitment within the mountain. If the youngest happen to locate the herb first, they were often snatched away by the older youths. The Qing Yun Clan disciples turned a blind eye to all these atrocities and did not interfere. Many fourteen and fifteen year olds had been victimised before Jun Wu Xie when older and bigger applicants had even ganged up to bully the younger and smaller ones to give up their herbs, and to give up their chance to enter the Qing Yun Clan as they were forced to leave in dejection when they failed the first test.

They were helpless, they were younger, and powerless. They could only suffer in silence when faced with blatant extortion.

The two youths before Jun Wu Xie, were of the same mind.

It was no wonder why they had targeted Jun Wu Xie. She was just fourteen and she had a small stature. She might have changed her looks to resemble a youthful boy, but her bone structure was plain for all to see. Among all the teenagers who came for the recruitment, there wasn't any as petite as she was, and she was dressed commonly which made her look to be from humble birth. That had made her the perfect target in the eyes of the bullies.

Jun Wu Xie frowned as she stared at the two youths as she raised an eyebrow.

They dared to snatch from her!?

Jun Wu Xie was about to open her mouth when a figure suddenly whizzed to stand before her. Before she could react, a slender arm suddenly stretched out towards one of the youths and like a lightning bolt, the youth was thrown over the figure's shoulder and flung far away from where they stood!

"You snivelling lowly worms, are you tired of living?! This is daylight robbery! Don't make me kill you!" A boyish teen dressed in patched up clothes challenged gallantly in front of Jun Wu Xie, his finger pointing at the dishevelled youth he had just thrown, and the other youth who stood flabbergasted by the sudden attack on his partner.

"....." Jun Wu Xie's expression froze.

After he gave them a piece of his mind, the figure turned around and a slightly intelligent face but with distinctive features appeared before Jun Wu Xie.

"Heh heh, what a coincidence! Imagine meeting you here! Don't worry, from now on, I will be your protector! If anyone were to bully you, I will beat the lights out of them!" The spirited youth grinned as he looked at Jun Wu Xie. Hmm...there was a familiar air about him.

Jun Wu Xie's brows furrowed as she studied the figure before her. She searched her mind throughout, but could not link the figure to any in her memory.

"You've got the wrong person." Jun Wu Xie finally said.

The youth paused in thought and his wide grin twisted into a grimace. He scratched at his head in frustration and looked agonizingly at Jun Wu Xie before his face lit up as if enlightened. He squatted on the ground and wiped his hands on the dusty ground. He smeared his dusty hands all over his face and picked up a blade of grass and dangled it from the corner of his mouth before he stood in front of Jun Wu Xie again to ask: "Think again."

Chapter 257: “Qiao Chu (1)”

Peering at the scruffy looking youth before her, Jun Wu Xie’s memory was jolted. Wasn’t this the unkempt youth she had met in Ghost City that sold her those dilapidated books?

With his face cleaned up, she could not recognize him at all.

“Remember me now?” The youth blinked his eyes in anticipation.

“It’s you?” Jun Wu Xie remarked calmly.

The youth wiped off the dust from his face and said: “You remember me at last.”

Jun Wu Xie nodded slightly. She had gone to the Ghost City only once, and she had changed her looks then only once like she had now. She had not expected that after so many months, the unkempt youth had recognised her at once.

“I did not think you would come to the Qing Yun Clan, I would not have thought they have anything that you might need.” The youth said as he continued to wipe his sleeve across his face. He had spotted Jun Wu Xie from afar earlier, and had hesitated not because he did not dare approach Jun Wu Xie, but was wondering why a kid who could concoct far better elixirs and medicine than the Qing Yun Clan come such a long way to apply to enter the Qing Yun Clan as a disciple.

Jun Wu Xie looked at the youth, with her eyes showing no intention to reply.

As though conscious of the fact that he was prying, the youth scratched vigorously at his hair and hurriedly tried to explain: “I am not trying to pry, but was just happy to see a familiar face here, and got a little too excited.”

Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow. Were they already familiar with each other?

The unkempt youth seemed oblivious to Jun Wu Xie's cold and distant eyes and in fact became more and more enthusiastic.

The other youth who had been thrown unceremoniously had already gotten to his feet holding his bottom and stared angrily at the unkempt youth who had rudely poked his nose into his business out of the blue.

“Who the hell are you? How dare you touch me!?” The youth squirmed at the pain in his bottom and was held up by the other youth.

The heavens forbid! The penniless unkempt youth who was wearing clothes all covered with patches had dared crawl out of his hole and thrown him heavily to the ground without a word of warning!? It was lucky he was still conscious.

The unkempt youth paid no heed to the youth screaming his head off and said to Jun Wu Xie: “Right, I’m Qiao Chu, and you?”

Jun Wu Xie stared at the overly enthused Qiao Chu and paused before softly replying: “Jun Xie.”

Left out to dry on his own, the screaming youth became furious as he saw that Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu totally ignored him. He took a step wanting to stomp up to them to give them a piece of his mind when Qiao Chu suddenly turned and waved his fist at him.

“Weaklings like you, I can handle more than ten.” Qiao Chu threatened menacingly.

The youth grabbed at the throbbing pain in his bottom from Qiao Chu's earlier attack, and stopped in his tracks, but he continued on his rant.

Jun Wu Xie was irritated by the noise and there were only two minutes before the time was up, and she did not want to waste her time on idiots like those.

Jun Wu Xie took a step forward and shoved the herb in her hand into the face of the ranting youth, and said curtly:

“Scram.”

The surprised youth brushed off the mud on his face and was about to continue on his tirade when his eyes fell upon the herb that had fallen to the ground. His eyes widened and he bent eagerly to pick it up in glee. He had thought that there was no chance of getting his hands on the herb from the petite youth now that the obnoxious unkempt youth appeared. Who would have thought the little brat would suddenly surrender the herb to him in fright?

“At least you know your place! Let’s go!” It was enough that he got the herb, despite the throbbing pain that persisted in his bottom. He was happily discussing how he should split the herb with the other youth.

Qiao Chu stood in his spot, dumbstruck, as he witnessed what Jun Wu Xie was doing.

“Are..... are you mad?”

.....

Chapter 258: “Qiao Chu (2)”

Jun Wu Xie ignored Qiao Chu’s stunned reaction, and turned to pick out an even bigger piece of herb from the tangled mess and walked on to complete the task.

Qiao Chu stood rooted in place till Jun Wu Xie had walked a distance away before he recovered from shock and ran to catch up.

“I can see that the task is nothing to you, but you shouldn’t allow them to take advantage of you like that.” Qiao Chu had no doubts of Jun Wu Xie’s capabilities, but he was feeling sore at the fact that those scoundrels would get away with it.

Meeting Jun Wu Xie here was a huge pleasant surprise for Qiao Chu.

The first time, when he had returned from the Ghost City and brought back the Eastern Pearl, he had told his comrades everything about the events that had happened in the Ghost City, and was soundly teased and scolded for being an idiot. Those rascals had made him go back to the Ghost City to wait and see if the delicate youth with extraordinary elixir making skills would appear again. Qiao Chu had been forced to lie in wait there for a whole month, before giving up after seeing no sign of him.

Who would have known? His months’ of hard searching had been futile and a moment’s chance meeting had delivered the youth right up to him right here at the Qing Yun Clan!

Qiao Chu was determined. This time, he would stick to Jun Wu Xie like glue shamelessly, and would not let the little genius slip from his fingers again!

As the self proclaimed protector of the petite Jun Wu Xie, when the bullies had taken advantage of Jun Wu Xie, Qiao Chu had felt as though he had been bullied instead. If he did not have urgent matters to attend to in the Qing Yun Clan’s peaks, he would have

dragged the two bullies into the bushes and given them a good thrashing!

Jun Wu Xie was intent on finishing the task at hand and while Qiao Chu carried on grumbling incessantly, Jun Wu Xie took a deep breath and turned to face Qiao Chu.

Qian Chu paused, and blinked his eyes.

“Things that belong to me, are never easily taken away.” Jun Wu Xie turned and handed over the herb to the Qing Yun Clan disciple. After his inspection, Jun Wu Xie was allowed to proceed, and Qiao Chu rushed up to hand over his own herb, still wondering on what Jun Wu Xie had meant by those words.

While Qiao Chu was still feeling confused, he suddenly heard a series of curses from afar. He looked up and saw the two bullies who had snatched the herb from Jun Wu Xie arguing with the disciple of the Qing Yun Clan who had inspected their herbs.

Held in the hand of one of the bullies, was no longer the same herb that Jun Wu Xie threw at them. It was obviously just dried up weeds. What puzzled him was, he noticed a darkening of the skin on the youth's hand, a sure sign of poison!

He thought back on Jun Wu Xie's earlier statement and Qiao Chu turned away from them covering his mouth as he grinned wickedly.

That kid must have planned this from the start, and had not intended to give in to the two bullies. Throwing the herb in their faces and watch them pick it up in glee, not knowing they were messing with a devil, and the results were devastating for them.

At which point in time did Jun Wu Xie smear the poison on the herb? That was something Qiao Chu could figure out and had him stumped.

When did she do it? Seems like only Jun Wu Xie herself would know.

Her spiritual powers might have increased in an extremely short period of time, but a orange leveled spirit was not that significant in the world. She did not come to the Qing Yun Clan to sightsee, but with an ambition to obliterate the mightiest clan throughout the lands. She had to prepare for any situations, and they must be lethal.

Jun Wu Xie was wearing a nondescript bangle, hidden below her sleeves, and nobody would notice it.

Hidden within that seemingly common bangle, were seven different types of poison. It needed only a slight twist, and it could kill a person in a moment.

Chapter 259: “Twelve Peaks (1)”

The Qing Yun Clan conducted three initial tests for their recruitment. Besides the first one, where Jun Wu Xie met the two bullies, she breezed through the next two tests easily.

These three tests alone, whittled the number of applicants going up the mountain from tens of thousands, to mere hundreds.

The crowded and squeezey thoroughfare felt much more spacious now.

What was surprising was that the seemingly slipshod Qiao Chu managed to pass all the tests as well, and was now grinning as he followed behind Jun Wu Xie, as he continued chattering all the way.

Those who passed the tests will stand a chance to study under the Qing Yun Clan's banner. The hundreds of applicants left had reached the summit and they could see the resplendent Qing Yun Clan's main temple before them. The applicants there were feeling awed, yet inspired with the sight.

If they were accepted into the Qing Yun Clan, their lives would drastically change!

The Qing Yun Clan disciple who lead the applicants to the summit raised his hand, to signal the noisy and excited crowd to be silent.

A tall figure was heavily escorted out from the Qing Yun Clan's main temple as he stepped out slowly. It was a stately middle aged man, looking no more than being in his early thirties, but for those who knew, the man was already in his forties, and he was the man at the top of the Qing Yun Clan, Qing Yue.

Following behind Qin Yue, were ten men of varied ages. Some of them had full heads of white hair, and some were just in the prime of their lives. But every single one of them, carried with them an

extraordinary air, and were finely dressed, as they trailed behind Qin Yue.

Qiao Chu stood beside Jun Wu Xie, as he stared upon the entrance of the various wielders of power in the Qing Yun Clan, and could not help himself but whisper into Jun Wu Xie's ear: "The man in the front is the Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan, Qin Yue. And the men behind him are the Elders of the eleven peaks..... Hmm..... It's rather strange though. Eleven elders but only ten of them are here? Where is Jiang Chen Qing of the Ash Cloud Peak?"

Where was Jiang Chen Qing?

Smashed to a pulp by the ring spirit of the lad standing right beside you.

Jun Wu Xie swept her eyes over Qin Yue and the men behind him. Bai Yun Xian had described the appearance of the Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan and of the various Elders to her and she had paid special attention to Mu Chen of the Cloud Treading Peak and Ke Cang Ju of the Hidden Cloud Peak.

Mu Chen was the youngest among the Elders of the eleven peaks, and was easily recognizable. Jun Wu Xie could spot him almost immediately as he stood at the outermost spot among the Elders. Mu Chen possessed a set of good looking features. He was handsome and did not show an ounce of frivolity. He was dressed in a light blue brocaded robe as he stood quietly at the end of the row. There was no conversation between the Elders, but she could faintly feel that Mu Chen did not get along well with the other Elders.

Just like it was with Mu Chen, Ke Cang Ju was distanced from the other Elders, but what was different was that Ke Cang Ju looked hideous. He was not tall, and what was most distinctive was his curved hunchback. He was dressed in a dark purple long robe and looked extremely sinister, as if he had just crawled out from an old grave. According to Bai Yun Xian, Ke Cang Ju did not enjoy

good relations with people in the Qing Yun Clan. Beside his dealings with the Sovereign, Qin Yue, he did not pay heed to any of the other Elders.

He had a gloomy personality and avoided contact with other Elders, and his appearance did not exactly encourage contact.

But, in actual fact, Ke Cang Ju was the Elder he valued most among the eleven Elders, even more than Jiang Chen Qing who was always with Qin Yue, did not enjoy the privileges given to Ke Cang Ju.

Qin Yue allocated the best resources of the Qing Yun Clan to Ke Cang Ju, and had left orders that no one was to trespass into the Hidden Cloud Peak, not even the other Elders.

Chapter 260: “Twelve Peaks (2)”

With the appearance of the Sovereign and the Elders, the youths were bursting with excitement as they stood ramrod straight and tried to stretch to stand as tall as their small still developing bodies would allow them, trying their best to impress the Sovereign and Elders by showing how “gallant” and “imposing” they are.

Unknown to the hundreds of youths who had made it through the three tests, the actual test was just about to begin. How many of them will remain in the Qing Yun Clan was not known yet.

Qin Yue stood before the mass of pumped up youths, his chin lifted, as he surveyed them as he would a batch of materials. He nodded at a disciple standing at the side and the disciple stepped forward to announce the criteria for the final assessment to the crowd.

“To be qualified to join the Qing Yun Clan, you must possess extraordinary abilities. The Qing Yun Clan does not just accept anybody. You might have passed the initial three tests, but that does not mean you are one of us yet. Your performance in the upcoming test will be the deciding factor on whether you are fit to join the Qing Yun Clan.....”

To be specific, for this last test, there was no criteria. The Qing Yun Clan just needed the hundreds of youths to showcase their best display of medical skills before the Sovereign and the various Elders.

It could be treatment, ability to concoct elixirs and medicines. As long as it was outstanding, they would win acceptance into the Qing Yun Clan.

Jun Wu Xie lowered her eyes, this seemingly simple test was in fact to make it easier for the Elders to select suitable candidates.

The Elders of the eleven peaks were specialised in different fields

of medicine, and their selection were usually based on candidates whose strengths aligned with theirs.

Mu Chen was specialised in the nurturing and development of veins and arteries, while Ke Cang Ju portrayed his expertise as the planting and cultivation of medicinal herbs.

Jun Wu Xie decided on entering Mu Chen's Cloud Treading Peak, and would naturally display her expertise on veins and arteries.

"Hey, have you decided on which peak you want to go to?" Qiao Chu noticed that Jun Wu Xie had been silent and bumped his elbow against Jun Wu Xie's.

Jun Wu Xie glanced at him, frowning slightly.

The youths around them heard Qiao Chu and they were shocked. They proceeded to stare at Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu from head to toe and saw that Jun Wu Xie was dressed in common clothes but Qiao Chu who was standing next to her could only be described as wretched. Qiao Chu could have been considered not bad looking but his worn out and patched clothes which had been washed thin made him look like a beggar on the street.

They all thought the two of them were shameless to even think they could choose the peak they liked when they were dressed so shabbily!

Qiao Chu finally noticed the disparaging glares directed at them. He narrowed his eyes and shook his fist at the few skinny youths who stood around them but that only won him more lowly muttered curses thrown in their direction.

"Brute!"

Qiao Chu could not be bothered with them and continued to badger Jun Wu Xie on her choice. Jun Wu Xie was slightly bothered by his persistence and finally muttered, almost in a whisper: "Cloud Treading Peak."

"Cloud Treading Peak? Why do you want to go to the Cloud

Treading Peak?” Qiao Chu was stunned. The Cloud Treading Peak was the smallest among the twelve peaks and had the weakest reputation. Even its Elder was only twenty over years old, how capable could he be? “Hey, let’s not go to Cloud Treading Peak, how about we go to the Hidden Cloud Peak? At Hidden Cloud Peak, we will only need to grow flowers and plants and be a gardener. Doesn’t it sound relaxing? Even as a new disciple, there won’t be much for us to do.”

And the criteria to enter is extremely low! This last statement, Qiao Chu chose to keep to himself.

“Not me.” Jun Wu Xie said coldly.

Hidden Cloud Peak relaxing? Only those who had died under mysterious and unexplained circumstances would find it relaxing.

Chapter 261: “Twelve Peaks (3)”

When the final test started, most of the youths gave it everything they had, wishing they could show off everything they’ve learnt all their lives to the Qing Yun Clan’s Sovereign and Elders. Some recited from medical classics, some pointed out the various acupressure points on paintings of the human body they had brought along, and some presented elixirs that they had supposedly concocted themselves.....

There were all kinds of presentations, made in many varied ways. Very soon, it became just like a fish market.

Jun Wu Xie had not rushed to react from the start, and only watched quietly as the youths turned the final assessment into a circus as they tried their hardest to present themselves in the best light possible.

Qin Yue and the others frowned, and as the situation got more and more rowdy, the frowns on their faces grew deeper and deeper.

“What a fracas! Do not get me involved in things like this ever again. If there are any that catches your eye, bring them back with you, and get the rest off the mountain.” Qin Yue could not stand to see anymore of the childish behaviours and the absence of talents among them, and stormed off in a huff.

Qin Yue was usually absent from the monthly recruitment on the fifteenth of each month, and came infrequently just to watch. And every time that he came, he had always stormed off like he did today.

Mu Chen watched with cold eyes as Qin Yue left, a sneer at the corners of his mouth.

Qin Yue was as diplomatic as he always was. The good ones among the applicants had already been spotted by Qin Yue before

they even entered the mountain and secretly brought within the Qing Yun Clan. He would not have any interest in these 'leftover' applicants here, and was rushing back to see and assess his new recruits.

The show he put up today here, was for the benefit of the Elders.

Mu Chen turned his eyes back to the front and looked at the applicants with neither pity nor compassion.

It was not their fault that the youths were blinded by their enthusiasm and exuberance, but it became their fault if they were blinded by it and did not use their brains, showing the lack of intelligence. These youths are just anxious to show off, without knowing what the Qing Yun Clan was looking for.

Just as Mu Chen was losing interest as well, he noticed something interesting.

A tiny petite figure was standing in the midst of the crowd, observing everyone around him with a cold stare, looking as if he wanted nothing to do with this crowd. The chill emanating from those eyes, did not seem fitting on someone of such a tender age.

For no apparent reason, Mu Chen found his interest stoked. Maybe it was the cold personality, or it might be the eyes, but they all just made Mu Chen feel, that that petite youth was different from the others.

As if the youth had felt his gaze, the youth raised his head and looked Mu Chen straight into his eyes and weaved his way out of the crowd in the direction towards Mu Chen.

Mu Chen watched the petite youth as he approached from far, but otherwise made no other move.

Several Qing Yun Clan disciples saw Jun Wu Xie walk out from the crowd and continued to approach closer to the Elders. They immediately stepped up and moved to stop the youth from getting any closer.

“The assessment has not ended, and you are not allowed to move freely within the Qing Yun Clan.” A lad looking to be in his early twenties frowned and looked at the petite Jun Wu Xie. ‘This youth was rather bold to dare approach the Elders!’

This had happened many times before, but it was usually resolved when the Qing Yun Clan disciples threw a word of warning, and the offender had always backed off.

But Jun Wu Xie had no intention of backing off. When she was stopped, she stood her ground and raised her head.

“I’m sorry! We’ll take our leave immediately!” Qiao Chu, who had followed behind Jun Wu Xie, noticed the gradually darkening faces of the Qing Yun Clan disciples and had shot forward to stand beside Jun Wu Xie, trying to pull her back while he persuaded.

Chapter 262: “First Impression (1)”

Jun Wu Xie stood unmoving, rooted to the spot. Before Qiao Chu could even react, Jun Wu Xie stretched out her hand and gripped the wrist of the Qing Yun Clan disciple.

In the next moment, the disciple was flung heavily to the ground!

“How dare you! Are you tired of living!? The Qing Yun Clan will not tolerate such impunity!” What audacity! Laying your hands on our disciples even before being accepted!?

The shouts that erupted shocked the crowd. They had been focused on displaying their best talents when the shouts shocked them into silence as they stared at the scene where the shouts had come from.

When they saw what had happened, they were all visibly stunned.

Was that brat asking to be killed? He dared strike a Qing Yun Clan disciple? Did he even want to enter the Qing Yun Clan!?

Some were shocked, some were smiling in glee. Everyone was competing for a spot to enlist into the Qing Yun Clan, and with every competitor that dropped out, it just meant a higher chance for the rest.

All of them thought, Jun Wu Xie had just forfeited her chance!

Qiao Chu was frozen in place, and sweat trickled down his face. This kid was usually so quiet, and without any warning, he had suddenly placed them both in such deep trouble!

They were still being assessed for goodness sake, and Jun Xie just suddenly decided to strike at a Qing Yun Clan disciple right before the Elders! They would definitely be thrown off the mountain next!

“I’m so dead! Brother Hua is so gonna kill me.” Qiao Chu cried

tearlessly as he stood beside Jun Wu Xie. Realising that Jun Xie had just stirred a hornet's nest, Qiao Chu nevertheless readied himself to take on the Qing Yun Clan disciples. Even if both of them were to be thrown out, he must never allow the Qing Yun Clan to lay a hand on this genius right beside him.

Looking at his thin arms and legs, Jun Xie would not be able to take a beating. If anything untoward was to happen to the genius, Brother Hua won't be the only one beating him up.

Not only the eyes of the mass of youths were attracted to the scene, even the Elders turned to look towards Jun Wu Xie.

The Elder with a long flowing white beard frowned and exclaimed with annoyance: "Kids nowadays, have no respect for rules and regulations. The Sovereign had not been wrong, this is a circus!"

Mu Chen stared darkly at Jun Wu Xie, but did not say anything. No one had noticed, that when the silent Ke Cang Ju had turned to see what had created such a ruckus, his eyes had flashed a moment, but had been suppressed just as quickly.

Just as the disciple was about to make his move, Jun Wu Xie suddenly said: "Spirit level orange, third stage, upper body veins and arteries congestion, lower body hollow, cold artery constricted....."

A string of names of the body's veins and arteries overwhelmed the disciple as his hand froze in mid air, his mouth gaped open in amazement as he stared at Jun Wu Xie.

What Jun Wu Xie had mentioned earlier were the major arteries that were critical to the development of spiritual powers. As a disciple of the Qing Yun Clan, he was naturally aware of the condition of his own veins and arteries within his body. An orange leveled spirit at twenty over years of age was nothing noteworthy in the Qing Yun Clan, and he had always pursued vigorously to become skilled in medicine or attain higher spiritual powers, but a

detailed diagnosis of his body's veins and arteries by his Teacher had told him exactly what Jun Wu Xie had just said!

“How..... how did you know?” The disciple asked, his face pale.

Jun Wu Xie retracted her hand from the man's wrist, and wiped at her fingertips carefully with a handkerchief before she said slowly: “With Flame Tailed Flowers, you can treat the midsection to relieve the upper body congestion, use the leaves of Moist Luck plant to soak in baths to clear out the lower body, and.....”

Jun Wu Xie went on without pausing as she gave the solutions and treatments for every condition that the man's veins and arteries were inflicted with. When she finished, she took a step back and stared at the stunned disciple.

If her long narration had fallen on the ears of the youths behind her, it might not have meant anything to them. But the Elders of the Qing Yun Clan were all well versed in Medicine, and they only needed to hear those words and they fully understood the significance of those very words!

Chapter 263: “First Impression (2)”

The looks of impatience and annoyance disappeared from all the faces of the Elders. Even the face of the oldest Elder among them showed an expression of shock after hearing Jun Wu Xie’s words.

The nurturing and development of veins and arteries was the most complicated among the various fields in the study of Medicine. The intricate weave of the multitudes of intertwined veins and arteries within a human body alone was enough to give anyone a headache, needless to say the study and knowledge required in the corrections and treatments needed when a problem is uncovered!

With the countless veins and arteries greatly intertwined, and even when only a small section was inflicted, the problems that surface could affect the entire being. Even if the specific treatment were to be identified, many could not be sure that the treatment might not cause any damage to other adjoining veins and arteries! Hence, when problems occur within a person’s veins and arteries, it was the hardest to treat and rectify, as the treatment was not subject to just the inflicted section, but a treatment that encompassed the entire body!

That petite little youth had not only managed to diagnose the disciple’s condition in such a short period of time, but had further managed to introduce a series of treatments targeting the various inflictions. What really shocked them was, the individual treatments recommended for the respective inflictions had sounded simple, and independent. But if all the treatments were to be carried out collectively, the result would be astounding! While it relieved the pain of the upper body, it would also clear out the lower body. While it nurtured the lower body, it nourishes the upper body against its deficiencies.....

The treatments Jun Wu Xie proposed were closely linked, if you looked at the string of treatments individually, it would not seem

impressive. But if you were to look at them as a whole, the series of treatments complement and complete a cycle, and the Elders were not able to see any side effects that might occur from it!

How old was this youth? And he understood so much about the intricacies of the nurturing and corrections of the human body's veins and arteries!?

“Elder Mu, was what the little youth said correct and true?” The other Elders’ understanding of veins and arteries were inferior to Mu Chen’s, and in order to verify what Jun Wu Xie had said, they had to check with Mu Chen.

At that moment, Mu Chen was not the least bit interested in the queries from the other Elders. The moment that petite youth had said those words, his eyes had been fixed and had not left from Jun Wu Xie!

He had fully immersed himself into the study and research of veins and arteries for more than a decade. He had been extremely gifted from a young age, and all the hard work he had put in had enabled him to surpass anyone in the understanding and knowledge of veins and arteries throughout the whole Qing Yun Clan. Hence, no one there knew better than him how perfectly complete the series of treatments that Jun Wu Xie proposed was!

Even for him, he might not be able to come up with something like that!

“That youth there, I want him!” He had no intention of explaining in details to the other Elders, the usually calm and stoic Mu Chen had suddenly declared the he wanted Jun Wu Xie to be enlisted within the Cloud Treading Peak and taken under his wing!

With Mu Chen’s unmistakable words, the other Elders should understand by now right?

What that youth said must be true! Or Mu Chen would not act so uncharacteristically to lay claim on an applicant!

It must be known that Mu Chen had seldom accepted any applicants as disciples into the Cloud Treading Peak in the months past, the amount of new disciples he accepted in a year could be counted with just one hand.

Seeing that Mu Chen had picked up a real treasure, the other Elders' eyes were turning rather green. Compared to the other childish and pathetic attempts by the other youths, Jun Wu Xie calm and affirmed gift in Medicine made them feel all that very much worse, and they all felt like snatching him away from Mu Chen!

Such a rare gem that appeared this time and Mu Chen was being rather selfish to claim him just like that.

The other Elders were green with envy, but they did not say a word more. The youth was gifted in his knowledge of veins and arteries and it was different from their areas of expertise anyway. Mu Chen would be in a better position to guide him.

The other youths were still waiting for the situation to explode when they saw the youngest Elder walk towards Jun Wu Xie, and their smiles widened as they waited to see Jun Wu Xie get thrown out off the mountain.

Chapter 264: “First Impression (3)”

Mu Chen walked up and stood before Jun Wu Xie, staring at the unusually calm youth before his stern expression broke into a smile.

“What’s your name?”

“Jun Xie.” Jun Wu Xie replied.

The youths who were anticipating the expulsion suddenly felt that situation seemed rather odd, as the Qing Yun Clan’s Elder was being rather mild. Shouldn’t he be throwing Jun Wu Xie out by now?

“Will you be interested to come to the Cloud Treading Peak?” Mu Chen asked gently.

Jun Wu Xie was surprised, but her face showed no emotion.

Mu Chen’s words created a stir among the applicants as they had expected to see Jun Wu Xie thrown out for her actions, but they could only stare at Jun Wu Xie in shock at what was happening.

How did it come to this?

The brat who challenged and offended the sanctity of the Qing Yun Clan should have been taken down! But he had been earned the interest of the Elder of Cloud Treading Peak instead!?

If he were to be accepted into the Cloud Treading Peak, he would immediately become a full fledged disciple of the Qing Yun Clan!

Who would have thought that Lady Luck would cast her smile upon such an unremarkable petite youth!?

All that was needed was just for Jun Wu Xie to agree, and she would become a disciple of the Qing Yun Clan, a true and earnest disciple of the Qing Yun Clan’s inner house!

That was a stroke of luck that many of them could only dream of, and the other youths harboured a deep jealousy as they clenched

their jaws in rage.

While waiting to hear Jun Wu Xie's reply, another voice sounded suddenly!

"Hold it, Elder Mu." A sharp and sinister voice suddenly spoke and it could be clearly heard by all present. Ke Cang Ju seemed shrouded in gloom as he walked towards Mu Chen, his hideous face was unreadable.

Mu Chen frowned, his displeasure with Ke Cang Ju visible.

"What's the matter, Elder Ke?"

Ke Cang Ju dragged his feet over the distance, his bowed back making him look more sinister. The hem of his robe had old bronze bells attached to it and they jingled with every step that Ke Cang Ju took.

"Those two lads there, I want them." Ke Cang Ju raised his hand, and a wrinkled bony finger pointed at Jun Wu Xie and the stunned Qiao Chu who stood beside her.

Mu Chen's heart sank at that moment.

"Elder Ke, what is the meaning of this? I had earlier declared that Cloud Treading Peak would accept her as a disciple. If Elder Ke is in need of more disciples, go look elsewhere!"

Ke Cang Ju scoffed: "Does that mean Elder Mu is making things difficult for me? I will have these two lads today! If Elder Mu has any objections to it, you can go take it up with the Sovereign. If the Sovereign agrees with you, I will hand over the lad, Jun Xie, over to you. If he disagrees, it would be better if Elder Mu remains silent."

Mu Chen clenched his fists, hidden within his sleeves, as he stared furiously at Ke Cang Ju. Everyone knew he was on extremely bad terms with Qin Yue, and Cloud Treading Peak had always received the least resources. In contrast, Ke Cang Ju enjoyed the best support and was on friendliest terms with Qin

Yue. If he were to go ask Qin Yue, Qin Yue would never stand on his side and would surely reject him.

This fella, was obviously hijacking!

The two Elders started arguing in front of everyone, and it only made the others youths who were deeply jealous of Jun Wu Xie hate her even more.

What was so great about that brat that he was able to cause two Elders of the Qing Yun Clan to argue and fight over him!?

Unknown to everyone, the Jun Wu Xie whom the youths were jealous off, did not feel a single bit of joy. She frowned slightly at Ke Cang Ju who had suddenly just butted in. She had not expected that Ke Cang Ju would step forward to snatch from Mu Chen.

Chapter 265: “Hidden Cloud Peak (1)”

Ke Cang Ju looked sneeringly at Mu Chen and glanced at Jun Wu Xie. He did not see any joy on Jun Wu Xie’s face but saw a frown in disapproval.

“Kid, it’s your honour to be accepted into the Hidden Cloud Peak. If you are to reject me, you can get the hell out of Cloudy Peaks now.”

From snatching to threats, Ke Cang Ju’s methods were outrageously domineering and Mu Chen’s face was dark with fury. The other Elders might not agree with Ke Cang Ju’s methods but they all maintained their silence. Though Qin Yue tried to portray himself to treat the Elders equally, they all knew how much he favoured Ke Cang Ju.

Not to mention that Ke Cang Ju was snatching a favoured disciple from right under Mu Chen’s nose, even if Ke Cang Ju were to cripple the lad called Jun Xie now, Ke Cang Ju would not be persecuted by the Qing Yun Clan.

Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes and looked at the hideous Ke Cang Ju, her frigid eyes flashed with cold. Suddenly, she felt a slight tug at her sleeve as Qiao Chu whispered by her ear: “Jun Xie, do not do anything rash. You just wanted to get into the Qing Yun Clan, and getting in through the Cloud Treading Peak or the Hidden Cloud Peak does not make a difference right?”

Qiao Chu voice betrayed his anxiety, he knew that with Jun Xie’s prowess in his medical skills, there was nothing the Qing Yun Clan could teach him. There must be an ulterior motive behind his intention to get into the Qing Yun Clan, and instead of rejecting Ke Cang Ju and getting thrown out, why not go along with his wishes for now.

Jun Wu Xie closed her eyes and held back her murderous intent.

“I agree.” She spat out the words coldly.

And Ke Cang Ju broke into a hideous smile.

“Kid, you will soon find out that you had made the right choice today.” Ke Cang Ju cackled eerily in laughter, ignoring the fuming Mu Chen and just turned to leave.

Jun Wu Xie stared upon Ke Cang Ju’s departing back and her eyes were filled with chill.

He would soon know, how lethal a mistake he had just committed.

Mu Chen took a deep breath, and forcibly suppressed the raging fire within. He tried hard to maintain a face of calm, but the tightness in his mouth betrayed the rage within.

“If you still find that is a need in the future, you can come look for me in the Cloud Treading Peak. My invitation to you, will still stand.” Mu Chen said softly to Jun Wu Xie.

He did not care what kind of atrocities Ke Cang Ju had committed, but the youth before his eyes was a sincerely highly talented individual and he did not want the youth to be despoiled under the hands of Ke Cang Ju. He would not let go of the slightest chance, no matter how miniscule, for the chance to have the highly gifted child live.

“Thank you.” Jun Wu Xie looked at Mu Chen, sincerely grateful. Jun Wu Xie could feel Mu Chen’s sincerity.

Mu Chen nodded helplessly. With Ke Cang Ju’s interference, Mu Chen had lost all desire to accept any new disciples. The best candidates had already been taken, and the rest were beneath his notice.

Mu Chen had not known, his rare offer made today, would be the one that changed his life.

With two Elders leaving, the rest of the youths were getting

flustered. But to fight for the remaining spots, they tried their hardest to present their best.

For Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie who had been selected to enter the Hidden Cloud Peak, they retreated quietly and stood to the side in stark contrast to the other flustered youths.

“I know you wanted to go to the Cloud Treading Peak, but we were left with no choice. Rest assured though, with me around, not even that hideous monster from the Hidden Cloud Peak would be able to touch you.” Qiao Chu said to reassure Jun Wu Xie.

Chapter 266: “Hidden Cloud Peak (2)”

Jun Wu Xie did not reply, as things were, she had accepted them to be a fact.

Ke Cang Ju?

She would let him see who was the greater devil between them!

The game had just begun. There was no rush!

As expected, among the hundreds of candidates left, only slightly more than ten of them were picked by the Elders to enter the Inner House and less than a hundred admitted into the Outer House. The rest who made up the majority were asked to pack up and leave the mountain.

The day ended with many youth in tears, and several Qing Yun Clan disciples led the selected candidates to the various peaks.

Jun Wu Xie was put together with Qiao Chu, and the disciple that led them was the one that had almost fought with Jun Wu Xie, but now, the disciple did not treat them with his previous arrogance. It might be Jun Wu Xie's prior diagnosis of his condition that was delivered with pinpoint accuracy, but the disciple treated them with utmost courtesy.

“The Hidden Cloud Peak isn't too bad, and they don't have that much to do. It shouldn't be too tiring for you guys.” The disciple rambled on and then paused, turned his head to look around. When he was sure that there was no one else around, he turned to them and whispered: “Remember this. When you get to the Hidden Cloud Peak, do not go against Elder Ke.”

Jun Wu Xie looked up at the disciple of the Qing Yun Clan. She had heard from Bai Yun Xian about the ominous dangers of the Hidden Cloud Peak, but she had not expected to hear the well intended warning from a disciple of the Qing Yun Clan.

Noticing Jun Wu Xie's eyes on him, the disciple turned away

consciously.

“Our altercation had instead brought us together and made us fellow disciples. If I had offended you before, I hope my junior fellow disciple would forgive me.” The disciple went on.

“From which peak is my senior?” Jun Wu Xie asked suddenly.

“Me? I’m from the Cloud Treading Peak, but not a direct disciple of Elder Mu. I am only assigned odd jobs and menial tasks there. My name is Rong Heng.” Rong Heng laughed good naturedly and hesitated before he went on: “I would like to thank you for earlier. I have noted down everything you said, but might not be able to get all the herbs you mentioned. I would have to hand the prescription over to my Master.”

The sudden change in Rong Heng’s demeanour was not entirely without reason. What Jun Wu Xie had said earlier could drastically improve his veins and arteries and allow him to break his current stagnant progress and maybe achieve a breakthrough. That would change his life completely and for that, he was eternally grateful.

Jun Wu Xie nodded and was silent for a moment before she said: “If my senior can find the time in half a month’s time to come to the gates of the Hidden Cloud Peak, wait for me there an hour before noon, I have something to give you.”

Jun Wu Xie did not feel that Rong Heng owed her anything, as her actions had been only meant to attract Mu Chen’s attention and it had inadvertently brought her Rong Heng’s gratitude as well. Rong Heng’s kind intentions behind his warning to the two of them was about to win him a real reward nevertheless.

Jun Wu Xie would never forgive a wrong done upon her, but would also repay any kindness showered upon her. If she were to benefit from others, she would definitely repay in folds.

Rong Heng was not aware of the great fortune he was soon to reap, and did not know what Jun Wu Xie wanted to give him. He

simply nodded and continued to lead the way.

At the gates into the Hidden Cloud Mountain, they met with another group of candidates.

They had not been selected and were supposed to leave the mountain, but a disciple of the Qing Yun Clan had led them here instead. There were about twenty to thirty of them and when they saw Jun Wu Xie and her group, their faces showed that they were pleased at their unexpected fortune but still harboured a deep resentment for Jun Wu Xie.

“Isn’t that our distinguished senior fellow disciple? Being so distinguished, he could not afford to walk as fast as us can he?” A youth in the group sneered at Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu.

Chapter 267: “Hidden Cloud Peak (3)”

Those youths had been overcome with jealousy when the two Elders had fought over Jun Wu Xie at the selection assessment. They had given up all hope when they did not get selected and were about to leave from the summit when they met with a disciple of the Hidden Cloud Peak. He selected several tens of them and told them that Ke Cang Ju had picked them to be admitted into the Hidden Cloud Peak and they would become disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak henceforth.

What a turn of events!

They were pulled out of their despair and were elated at the news. Now that they met Jun Wu Xie again, the one who had won the envy and jealousy of every single one of them in their group, they could not contain their disdain for her.

So what if two different Elders had picked her? She was admitted into the Hidden Cloud Peak just like they were. They had wondered what ability she possessed but now it seemed she was just like anyone of them there.

Teenagers were prone to having a rebellious streak and they had already disliked Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu for being selected during the assessment. Now that they are facing the two of them, everything about them displeased the bigger group of youths.

Jun Wu Xie ignored the jeers and sneers and Rong Heng just sighed and said to Jun Wu Xie: “I can only escort you up to this point. From here on, the Hidden Cloud Peak disciple will lead you. Take care.”

Jun Wu Xie nodded at Rong Heng and walked with Qiao Chu to join up with the group who still looked at the duo with daggers in their eyes but Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu were totally unaffected as they stepped into their midst.

“You must think yourself really great! You think you are better than all of us?” A slightly older youth among them was irked by Jun Wu Xie’s cold and distant attitude and charged at Jun Wu Xie with his heavier body.

Alas, he did not even manage to even touch any part of Jun Wu Xie before Qiao Chu stepped in suddenly and grabbed his shoulder, reversed the grip of his other hand to grab the forearm, and raised his foot and kicked down forcefully!

A loud snap sounded and the youth’s arm had been broken in a flash!

And a screeching wail burst out from the youth.

A malicious expression surfaced on Qiao Chu’s usual lazy look, and he narrowed his eyes dangerously, looking at that moment, like a totally different person from Qiao Chu’s usual laidback and carefree attitude.

“Stay away or I’ll do worse.”

The youth with the broken arm continued to wail and the others turned pale and sweat ran down their backs at Qiao Chu’s brutal attack. The Qing Yun Clan’s disciple nonchalantly glanced at Qiao Chu and did not say anything.

Qiao Chu’s expression changed back like a switch, as he went back to stand beside Jun Wu Xie, his malicious expression before had disappeared without a trace. He then said with a laugh: “My fists are tough enough to fight off any who dares bully you in the Hidden Cloud Peak.”

Jun Wu Xie noted with interest Qiao Chu’s quick change in demeanor but did not see anything wrong with it.

She did not think Qiao Chu’s attack was brutal, if they were not at the Qing Yun Clan’s Cloudy Peaks, she would have told Qiao Chu that you need to root out the evil and not allow them to live to come back and haunt you. But since they were going to the Hidden

Cloud Peak, that youth would not live long anyway, it did not make a difference if Qiao Chu left him alive or not.

“If you have finished playing then come with me.” The Hidden Cloud Peak disciple muttered disagreeably as he looked at the group with impatience.

Qiao Chu’s attack had frightened the youths who treated them with disdain, and no one dared utter a single word against them as they walked through the gates of the Hidden Cloud Peak.

The Hidden Cloud Peak was the second largest among the twelve peaks, after the Sovereign Qin Yue’s, and it boasted a large surface area. Upon entering the Hidden Cloud Peak, fog hung heavily in the air, and dense forests stood on both sides shrouded in the fog. Peering into the fog, beds of herbs that were planted lining both sides of the path could faintly be seen.

The Hidden Cloud Peak was well known to people externally to specialise in the planting and cultivation of herbs. It was even said, the one could find every single rare herb in the world within the Hidden Cloud Peak.

Chapter 268: “Hidden Cloud Peak (4)”

The youths had been jittery ever since they’ve entered the Hidden Cloud Peak. When they saw the expansive beds of a multitude varieties of herbs everywhere around them, they became overcome with awe. They started to look around for rare herbs that they had heard of, exclaiming loudly as they identified them, seemingly trying their best to impress the Hidden Cloud Peak disciple of their “wide knowledge”.

Besides childish and moronic, Jun Wu Xie could not find any other words to describe these lambs on their way to slaughter.

The Hidden Cloud Peak disciple led them to their living quarters. The Hidden Cloud Peak lived up to its name as the second largest peak. The disciples’ living quarters were extremely spacious and a scattering of several disciples were walking across the huge courtyard with their heads lowered, showing no interest in the new batch of junior fellow disciples just accepted into Hidden Cloud Peak.

The disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak were well treated, and each disciple was assigned an individual room. Not even disciples of Qin Yue himself enjoyed such privileges in their living quarters. In Qing Yun Clan, besides for Elders and the privileged few specially granted by the Sovereign himself, a single room was usually shared by two or three disciples.

Walking into their own rooms, the group of youths were laughing at the luxurious quarters they were to enjoy, silently thinking their fortunes had really turned around.

Jun Wu Xie’s room was next to Qiao Chu’s, situated at the northern edge of the quarters. Their rooms were next to a pond and it was decorated with artificial mountains, and it looked rather elegant.

Sitting on a chair in the room, Jun Wu Xie’s eyes scanned the

room. The beddings were new, although they were of rather bad quality, they were at least clean. She had not sat down for long before a slight frown appeared on her face.

A light familiar scent of blood swirled below her nose. The smell was very faint, almost too faint to be noticed. If not for her unusually keen sense of smell, she would not have noticed it at all.

Following the hated scent, Jun Wu Xie came to stand before the table next to the bed. The paint on a corner of the table was new, its colour a slightly brighter shade than the rest. Jun Wu Xie retrieved a small dagger from her cloth bag and scraped off the paint in that corner. The orange paint flaked off bit by bit and the original wood was revealed. Looking at it closely, within the wood itself, it was stained with the darker shade of blood. The bloodstain looked rather recent when blood had dripped on the table and seeped into the wood staining it a dark shade of red, and it was impossible to wash off.

“This is interesting.” Jun Wu Xie sat back on the chair and stared at the carelessly covered bloodstain and her cold eyes flashed.

The Hidden Cloud Peak was as dangerous as she had heard. The previous occupant of this room did not die too long ago, or the scent of blood would have completely dissipated.

Ke Cang Ju accepted a large number of disciples on the fifteenth of every month. But she had secretly observed earlier within the living quarters of the disciples, there were less than two hundred of them when added up. According to Ke Cang Ju’s acceptance of thirty disciples every month, the numbers did not add up, not even when you multiply it by ten.

Judging from Ke Cang Ju’s way of accepting disciples this time round, he had accepted her and Qiao Chu openly, but he had also secretly got his disciples to gather almost another thirty rejected candidates after the assessment and brought them back to the Hidden Cloud Peak.

If Ke Cang Ju had done it the same way all this while, others would not see anything suspicious about the Hidden Cloud Peak.

After all, from what many on the outside can see, the Hidden Cloud Peak did not have that many disciples.

All traces of their existence were erased, they were thorough in their deceit.

Jun Wu Xie got up, and took out a sealed porcelain bottle. She heaped the scraped paint together into a tiny heap and poured a tiny bit of the liquid from the bottle onto it. The dry paint dissolved gradually and Jun Wu Xie smeared the paint across gently with the bottom of the bottle, and recoated the corner she had scraped off with the paint. In a moment, it was restored to look as it had before.

Chapter 269: “Dream turned Nightmare (1)”

[Mistress, it seems bad in here.]

Black mist seeped out of Jun Wu Xie’s body into a ball and coalesced into the agile little black cat. It jumped onto the soft bed and swished its furry tail furiously, looking like it was trying to dispel the bad smell in the air.

“It’s just the heavy smell of death.” Jun Wu Xie said dismissively, a smell she was extremely familiar with. Dissipated from the rotting bodies under the surface, the scent of death gradually blossomed here. The Hidden Cloud Peak looked on the surface to be a place exalted and revered, but hidden underneath, was mysterious deaths, unseen, unknown.

[That hideous monster must have been up to no good.]

The little black cat had seen Ke Cang Ju clearly when it hid within Jun Wu Xie’s body, and he had looked absolutely horrendous.

Jun Wu Xie was silent and sat quietly in the chair.

They had just come to the Hidden Cloud Peak and they were led straight to the living quarters by the disciple. No one else paid them any attention and the excited youths in the group had gathered in the courtyard all afternoon. They did not dare stray or wander without any instructions given as they highly treasured this opportunity given to them.

When night approached, several Hidden Cloud Peak disciples were returning to the quarters. The newcomers had grown hungry and they watched as their senior fellows passed them. One of them gathered his courage and approached the seniors to ask for food, but were sent crawling back with cold stares.

Only when night had fully fallen, and the youths were ravenously hungry, the disciple who had led them to the quarters

earlier in the day ambled in slowly and shouted for all the new recruits to gather.

Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu stepped out of their rooms and exchanged a glance, and they did not see a sign of hunger on each other.

“Senior, it’s..... already so late into the night....., when can we eat?” The ravenous youths held their bellies as they looked at the disciple.

The disciple cast them a glance and replied maliciously: “You want to eat?”

The youths nodded eagerly.

The disciple raised his hand and pointed outside, and said: “Look, there are a hundred large urns outside. Five miles to the east, lies a mountain spring. Everyone of you will have to fill up three large urns with water. If you do not complete it, don’t even think about dinner tonight, or even tomorrow’s breakfast.”

“What!?” The youths were utterly shocked. They had seen the huge urns earlier today when they had come in. They were larger in width than any of them with their hands stretched out and were as tall as they were. The distance of five miles was not too far away but a round trip would make it ten. They had starved for a whole day and had not even a drop of water and it was already so late at night, they did not have the energy to carry water treading through the mountains. Such huge urns to fill, and to fill up three at that, would require tens and tens of trips for them.

The uneven mountain paths did not make it easier, but even if the path was flat and even, none of them would be able to complete it.

“So, what is this? You guys are complaining? Let me tell you, the water in those urns will be used to water the herb beds tomorrow. If you cannot do it, then get out of here quick. The Hidden Cloud

Peak has no use for useless wimps like that!” The disciple sneered and gave them a good tongue lashing.

The youths had been happily languishing around all day thinking that their dreams had finally come true, but they all huddled in fear together now, when they found out that their nightmare had actually just begun.

A dream of fantasy that suddenly fell straight into their hands, was actually a nightmare that could claim all their lives!

They stubbornly refused to give up this rare opportunity to have been finally accepted into the Hidden Cloud Peak, and pushed themselves to hang on. Even when the task given was impossible, they dragged themselves up and moved to carry it out.

Chapter 270: “Dream turned Nightmare (2)”

Dragging their tired bodies, the youths went out and picked up the buckets to go on their way to retrieve water from the spring.

Two lazy bodies trailed at the back of the group and watched the others drag their wretched bodies hobbling unsteadily to fetch water.

“Hungry?” Qiao Chu asked after everyone else had left and the two of them were alone outside the quarters.

Jun Wu Xie shook her head. Her appetite had always been small and did not hold great interest in the desire for food, only ensuring that she ingested adequate nutrition and carbohydrates daily and not anything more than that. The elixirs she brought with her provided her with that sufficiently and she did not feel any hunger.

“Here, keep this with you. You don’t have to eat them today, just keep them for another time. This torment should still continue on for quite awhile longer.” Qiao Chu took out a packet of dried meat from his bag and stuffed it into Jun Wu Xie’s hands.

Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow and looked at Qiao Chu. He had chattered endlessly all this while, but his actions at times had revealed clues contrary to the mindless personality he projected. Qiao Chu’s initial aim had been to get admitted into the Hidden Cloud Peak, and his actions after had shown him to be familiar with the internal workings here. Dried meat were small and inconspicuous, they were most ideal as rations. People rarely kept any on themselves but for the well traveled, and Qiao Chu seemed to have prepared for the unexpected circumstances rather well.

Qiao Chu had hinted from the beginning that he would protect her in the Hidden Cloud Peak, so it seemed he knew a few things about things happening here. The dried meat was also prepared beforehand against tonight’s expected torment.

What was Qiao Chu's objective here with the Qing Yun Clan?

Qiao Chu noticed that Jun Wu Xie did not accept the dried meat and he stuffed it back into his own bag. "If you get hungry, just let me know. I have more than enough. Let's not carry water, the task is impossible to complete. Why don't you just hang around out here? If you go back now, you would only get nagged at by the seniors."

Qiao Chu was also obviously not going to become the Hidden Cloud Peak's labourer.

"Where are you going?" Jun Wu Xie asked suddenly.

Qiao Chu hesitated, and thought what Jun Wu Xie was going to do left alone.

"You want me to stay out here, what about you?" Jun Wu Xie pointed out the absence with no mention of himself.

Qiao Chu slapped his forehead in frustration and said: "I was rather obvious, wasn't I? Brother Hua had always scolded me for that." He looked around to make sure there was no one around before he said in a low voice: "I am going to find someone. The Hidden Cloud Peak is extremely dangerous, so do not stray too far from here. After I am done talking with that person, I will come back here for you."

In Qiao Chu's eyes, Jun Wu Xie's petite little frame and skinny limbs would be very dangerous to stay within the Hidden Cloud Peak. He thought if he was not around to keep his eyes on Jun Wu Xie, the other youths might prey on him and carry him off with them.

"I'll go with you." Jun Wu Xie said to Qiao Chu.

Qiao Chu was taken aback.

"You want to come with me?"

Jun Wu Xie nodded.

Qiao Chu was more familiar with the Hidden Cloud Peak than she was. No matter who Qiao Chu was, he was obviously not friendly to the Qing Yun Clan. If there were no conflicts in their objective, she was willing to familiarise herself a little through Qiao Chu.

Qiao Chu was looking troubled, he looked at Jun Wu Xie and paused a long moment before saying: "Alright, but you must promise me. No matter what you see, you must not make a single noise."

It might be better to bring Jun Xie along, leaving him here alone in the lion's den did not sit that comfortably with Qiao Chu either.

It was obvious, Qiao Chu had a wrong perception of Jun Wu Xie. He saw Jun Wu Xie as a defenceless little youth, cleanly forgetting Jun Wu Xie's previous abilities with poison he had witnessed just recently with his own eyes.

Chapter 271: Dream turned Nightmare (3)

Jun Wu Xie who had been mistakenly taken to be a harmless little bunny, was hence led by Qiao Chu deep into the inner parts of the Hidden Cloud Peak.

Qiao Chu proceeded unerringly, and stuck to dark and dim paths, totally avoiding the patrolling disciples within the peak.

Seeing Qiao Chu's familiarity with the route to take, Jun Wu Xie grew more certain with her earlier guess.

Qiao Chu's knowledge of the Hidden Cloud Peak, might not be inferior to Bai Yun Xian!

She followed Qiao Chu through many of Hidden Cloud Peak's architecture. Jun Wu Xie's sharp nose told her, the deeper they went into the Hidden Cloud Peak, the stronger the scent of herbs and medicine was permeated in the air. The smell was not exactly the fragrance that herbs originally gave out when processed, but was the scent of a multitude variety of herbs mixed together. The stench was rather pungent, and did not smell like anything like nourishing or healing medicine.

Finally, Qiao Chu stopped before an unremarkable building. Outside the building, two Hidden Cloud Peak disciples stood guard. It was late into the night and the two guards looked to be rather tired as they leaned on the doors, eyes half closed, almost drifting off to sleep.

In the next moment, Qiao Chu streaked like a bolt of lightning past the two sleepy guards, and raised both his hands and quickly knocked the lights out of both of them before they even realised anything was amiss.

With the guards taken out, Qiao Chu waved to Jun Wu Xie who had stayed hidden in the dark, and proceeded to push the doors open to enter inside.

Jun Wu Xie followed closely behind. Upon setting foot inside the building, an overwhelming stench of blood swept over them, nearly gagging Jun Wu Xie.

The interior was lit dimly, and the faint light shone upon the furnishings within. The walls were filled with shelves of herbs and nothing looked out of place. But the thick stink of blood that went into their lungs made Jun Wu Xie realise that everything before their eyes here, was just a false front put up, to fool the unsuspecting.

Qiao Chu turned a corner from the room and squatted down to pull at a part of the floor. A gaping dark tunnel appeared before them, so dark that the bottom could not be seen. The intense stench of blood had rushed out from the darkness when the trapdoor was opened, and the stink continued to surge forth, almost as if alive.

“Follow me.” Qiao Chu said quietly to Jun Wu Xie and took out a small light, a small glowing amber, and stepped down onto the dark staircase leading down.

Jun Wu Xie followed behind Qiao Chu in the seemingly endless darkness. It was deathly quiet, and the unnerving silence pounded at their souls like a soundless knell.

And soon, the stairs brought them to a scene straight from hell.

The underground chamber was filled with large urns scattered all over, and a liquid bubbled within them as they emitted a dark green gas. More shockingly, was that every large urn contained a live human soaked within the liquid!

Or rather, those people looked more dead than alive.....

The humans immersed within the urns were stark naked and their skin were festered with sores from being soaked in poisonous liquids. Their eyes had been gouged out and left with two dark gaping holes, and their mouths were gagged and tied with black

ropes. Dried blood smeared around their mouths in dark brown streaks as they sat unmoving within the urns. Their lolled heads did not show any signs of movement, but only the slight rise and fall in their chests showed anything otherwise to Jun Wu Xie.

They were still alive!

Tens of urns stood with incapacitated humans immersed within. Above the urns, there were several wooden racks. Several more youths were chained to the racks and stripped off their clothes. They were covered in many festering wounds and the pus emitted a pungent stink. Another young youth hung from the rack, skinned alive.....

Chapter 272: “Brother Hua (1)”

The sight before her eyes brought a humming in Jun Wu Xie’s mind. At that moment, she felt like she had been transported back into the prison of her nightmares. Under the coercion of the demon, she was forced to watch him conduct various inhumanely cruel experiments on the human body.

Qiao Chu noticed Jun Wu Xie’s sudden pale face and he looked guiltily at Jun Wu Xie.

“I had not wanted you to see all these.....” He had obviously known of this repulsive place hidden within the Hidden Cloud Peak.

“I’m alright.” Jun Wu Xie snapped back to her senses and waved her hand. She had burned that hell on earth to the ground, and sent that demon into the inferno.

She had nothing more to fear!

Qiao Chu did not know how to console Jun Wu Xie and could only scratch his head furiously in frustration as he led them deeper into the underground chamber.

The further in they went, the sights grew more grisly. The gory hell hidden deep within the Hidden Cloud Peak, was a nightmare brought to life!

At last, Qiao Chu stopped to stand before a wall. Upon the wall, a tall youth had two hooks pierced through his pelvic bones, and nine other stakes were driven through his body. His two hands were secured by chains that hung suspended from the ceiling. Fresh red blood ran from his wounds and flowed down his body, finally dripping from his toes. A pool of blood had formed on the floor below him.

His head was lowered and he was silent, as if dead.

“You’re finally here?” A gentle but cold voice sounded suddenly,

and the youth who hung from the wall suddenly came alive as he raised his head.

He had rather feminine features and looked pretty enough to make a person not want to destroy that beauty. The eyes slightly inclined at the outers corners had a small mole dotted just below one, which lent a bewitching essence to the youth's beautiful features.

“Bro..... Brother Hua.....” Qiao Chu stared at the horribly ravaged but still pretty looking youth above.

Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes and looked at the figure upon the wall. She measured the wounds suffered by the youth and was surprised that anyone could still remain conscious under those conditions. That guy had a very strong will.

The pretty youth frowned as his eyes set on Jun Wu Xie standing behind Qiao Chu.

“Who is that?”

Qiao Chu gulped and said: “This is the boy I mentioned to you guys before. The genius I met in Ghost City.”

Genius? Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow at that statement.

The youth who was Brother Hua narrowed his eyes further and a astonishing sight played out right before Jun Wu Xie's eyes!

The youth who had been imprisoned by the hooks and stakes suddenly started to move. His hands that had been tied with chains seemed to slip out from them and hung limply as if his bones had been sucked out of him. While he freed himself from his shackles, he set a foot against the wall behind him and pushed himself free from the hooks on his pelvic bones. His tall slender frame drew a graceful arc in the air as he landed firmly before Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu, his bare feet in the puddle of his own blood.

Brother Hua who was standing on the firm ground had restored his hands, the distinct joints in his fingers and hands pulling out

the stakes lodged into his body one by one.

The stakes removed had flesh stuck to them but he did not even flinch, and only continued to stare at Jun Wu Xie through narrowed eyes.

His escape from his imprisonment had been so graceful and easy for him that it left anyone watching stupefied.

“Why did you bring him here?” Brother Hua turned and his cold eyes bore into Qiao Chu. The pretty youth’s angry stare did not pose any real threat to Qiao Chu, but had instead been charming and gentle.

Chapter 273: “Brother Hua (2)”

Qiao Chu cleared his throat nervously and said: “Brother Hua, you should have a little more faith in me. I just happened to meet Jun Xie here in the Qing Yun Clan’s Cloudy Peaks. We were both candidates applying to be admitted into the Qing Yun Clan as disciples. You know very well how dangerous it is late at night within the Hidden Cloud Peak, if I had left him alone out there, he would have been in grave danger.”

The pretty youth’s frown eased and he turned to Jun Wu Xie and said: “My name is Hua Yao, our dense Qiao Chu told us about you before and we did not expect to meet you here. This is not exactly the right place nor the right time for a first meeting, or I would have much more I would like to say to you.”

Hua Yao had a pleasant voice, and his tone was neither hurried nor slow, pulling at the heartstrings of people, but his bewitchingly pretty face was startlingly cold.

“If you are anything like what Qiao Chu had told us, I would think that you had come to the Qing Yun Clan with other underlying motives and not just to be a disciple under them. The Hidden Cloud Peak is not a safe place, no matter what your motives are, just remember this. Stay away from Ke Cang Ju. Do not pay heed to any of the seniors’ suggestions to meet up alone, and do not take any medicine or elixirs of unknown origins..... If you can, do not even eat or drink anything from them.” The brow that had just eased suddenly creased back into a frown.

When Qiao Chu had first mentioned his meeting with the kid in the Ghost City, they had hoped to find him again, to see if he could help them with producing the elixir that they needed.

They had managed to find the person, but it most definitely was not the right place or time for them to discuss any of their intentions.

They had another task at hand and were unable to bring Jun Wu Xie back with them, and they could only try their best not put expose Jun Wu Xie to any danger before their mission was completed.

“Those people out there, the disciples the Hidden Cloud Peak newly brought in, did not have their names recorded in their list of disciples. Even if they were to die, no one would be able to find out they were associated with the Hidden Cloud Peak. All the disciples secretly brought in by Ke Cang Ju, would end up dying here in this underground chamber, as his live subjects in his research of poisons. If I remember it correctly, he will torture the batch of new recruits the first night they enter the Hidden Cloud Peak.” Hua Yao continued.

“You should have seen them, Brother Hua! That hideous beast actually made everyone go hungry and made them go fetch water.” Qiao Chu nodded as he said, revealing that his well prepared self must have been through the information given by Hua Yao.

Hua Yao’s lips curled slightly, forming into a devilish cold smile.

“Vigorous activities on an empty stomach will burn out those bodies thoroughly, and it will not be a surprise if a few of them were to fall ill. If Ke Cang Ju truly intends to kill the whole bunch of recruits, he will not do it to all of them at the same time, but to start off with the most inconspicuous methods and whittle them down bit by bit to fully utilise them. The Hidden Cloud Peak is actually just a pen that cages in all these sacrificial sheeps, and Ke Cang Ju just needs to introduce an excuse or two when he needs to, and to keep the rest in the dark about his shady actions, he proclaims to bring back and ‘heal’ those that had fallen sick. Am I right?” Jun Wu Xie asked nonchalantly, her eyes narrowed as she shared her analysis.

In order to not alert the rest of the herd of sacrificial sheep, Ke Cang Ju used harsh treatments to tire them out, and those disciples who injured themselves or needed other treatments

would be brought to the Elder, and nothing would seem out of place.

And as for those who were brought away, the rest would be too tired to bother whether they were dead or alive.

A whole batch of new and naive recruits brought into the Hidden Cloud Peak, would only end up dying one after another. And by the time any of them felt anything amiss, it would have been too late.

Chapter 274: “Brother Hua (2)”

Hua Yao looked at Jun Wu Xie in surprise, he had not expected to see such a young boy to be able to assess Ke Cang Ju’s underhanded and malicious deeds in such detail after just spending half a day in the Hidden Cloud Peak. He saw that Jun Wu Xie was indeed extraordinary.

“Your guess is right on the mark. That is indeed Ke Cang Ju’s modus operandi. He would bring in a few of them every other few days, and kills them all off slowly. Within the Hidden Cloud Peak, only those disciples dressed in the Qing Yun Clan’s uniform are truly safe as they are wolves of the same pack, and know exactly how things work within the peak.” Hua Yao affirmed, impressed by Jun Wu Xie.

“You came in last month?” Jun Wu Xie looked at Hua Yao, noticing the grave injuries on him, but compared to the others within this underground chamber, were far less serious, and at least he was conscious.

Hua Yao nodded, “I am the last one to be brought here into this chamber from the previous batch, and I sent my contractual ring spirit bearing all these information to Qiao Chu before I came in.”

Jun Wu Xie observed Hua Yao and noticed the blood on his wounds had clotted. His body looked a mess, but he seemed to be in good spirits. If he had not been seen to have hung shackled and pierced with stakes to the wall just moments ago, nobody could have guessed at the travesty done upon him.

For a normal person, to have their pelvic bones pierced through and stakes driven through the body, even if they did not die, they would be on their last breaths. But Hua Yao seemed to still be rather spirited.

Noticing Jun Wu Xie’s eyes upon Hua Yao, Qiao Chu stepped up and rested a hand on Hua Yao’s shoulder, “Don’t just judge Brother

Hua in his wretched state, these injuries to him, are just a walk in the park.”

Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow, from Hua Yao’s escape from his shackles that pinned him to the wall, this pretty youth could only be someone extraordinary.

“I have free control over my bones.” To clear up Jun Wu Xie’s doubts, Hua Yao raised a hand, and his slender fingers turned visibly soft before her eyes, and the bones within seemed to have disappeared into thin air, his hand hanging limply from his wrist.

Jun Wu Xie’s eyes flashed with a slight tinge of surprise. She had met contortionists in her previous life who were able to change their bones in certain ways, but they were in no way comparable to what Hua Yao was capable of. Hua Yao’s control over his bones did not only allow contortion, but seemingly allowed him to freely make his bones grow or disappear at will.

“What is your objective here?” Jun Wu Xie reined in her surprise. From Qiao Chu’s and Hua Yao’s actions, she was able to ascertain that they were definitely not allies of the Qing Yun Clan.

As long as they were not friendly to her enemy, she would find a use for them.

“We are here to retrieve some things, what about you?” Hua Yao restored his hand. He did not hide his objective for coming here. Just like Jun Wu Xie, he was clear they were all not friendly towards the Qing Yun Clan.

They both had their own objectives, and they could form a temporary alliance. Besides, they had another favour to ask of Jun Wu Xie, and the intelligent should know very well when they should show their sincerity.

Among them all, Jun Wu Xie, Hua Yao and Qiao Chu were intelligent people.

“I am here to wipe out the entire Qing Yun Clan.” Jun Wu Xie

spoke easily, but every single one of her words stunned her listeners.

Qiao Chu widened his eyes in amazement, staring in disbelief at Jun Wu Xie, and even Hua Yao's face showed a flash of surprise.

“You..... you must be kidding right?” Qiao Chu dug his finger into his ears furiously, thinking he might have heard Jun Wu Xie wrongly.....

Wipe out the entire Qing Yun Clan? Was this guy serious!?

“I think our objectives are not in conflict. Cooperation, or fight our own individual battles?” Jun Wu Xie was not interested in lengthy explanations. Hua Yao's familiarity with the Hidden Cloud Peak would be useful to her, and if they agreed to cooperate, it would shorten the time she would take to annihilate the Qing Yun Clan, if not, she would not force the issue.

Chapter 275: Impersonation (1)

To Jun Wu Xie, her concept of an alliance, was just something that made things easier for her if available to use, and would not be much of a concern even if she did not make one.

She had initially planned to do everything on her own anyway.

But.....

Did she look like she was..... kidding?

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu exchanged a quick glance and immediately saw the obvious answer in each other's eyes.

Hua Yao looked at Jun Wu Xie and said: "We can work together, and after we succeed, we have a favour to ask of you."

"Speak." Jun Wu Xie was not surprised in the least. Qiao Chu had been enthusiastic all this time, and she did not think that having met just once before, would make Qiao Chu so fiercely protective of her.

"Qiao Chu mentioned that you have a way with producing elixirs, and we would like to ask for your help to produce a certain elixir. We will provide you with the recipe, and we will help to gather the herbs needed. You will only need to complete it from there." Hua Yao paused before he continued: "We do not demand guaranteed success, but only hope you can give it your best shot. If it is successfully completed, we would be most grateful. But if it happened to fail, we will not force the issue further."

Jun Wu Xie nodded slightly. Little wonder Qiao Chu had been so protective of her, it seemed like the elixir she had produced in the Ghost City had made Qiao Chu take notice of her.

To have made Hua Yao and Qiao Chu request for it so solemnly, it would not be anything simple or easy. But when Hua Yao had been so upfront about it, she saw no reason to reject him of his request.

Besides, in terms of medicine and the skills involved in elixir production, Jun Wu Xie had utmost confidence in herself.

As long as anyone in this world had successfully produced the elixir before, she did not believe it would be beyond her!

“Alright, you have my word.” Jun Wu Xie agreed without any hesitation.

Qiao Chu’s face broke into a joyous smile, “I knew it! I knew you would agree!”

“.....” Jun Wu Xie looked at Qiao Chu, it was just a fair deal between two parties, excessive emotions would only cloud the mind.

Hua Yao was used to Qiao Chu’s exuberant personality and ignored his outburst, he then proceeded to tell Jun Wu Xie about the Hidden Cloud Peak in detail.

Having been in the Hidden Cloud Peak for a whole month, Hua Yao’s understanding of the Hidden Cloud Peak completely overshadowed Bai Yun Xian’s.

Ke Cang Ju stayed within his own quarters every morning and never stepped out. He would only pass down instructions to the disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak in the afternoon and only for a short while. He was alone most of the time and even the authentic disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak did not have much interaction with him. After sundown, Ke Cang Ju would come to this underground chamber, and subject his new recruits to unspeakable torment.

For the youths imprisoned here in this chamber, Ke Cang Ju only saw them as test subjects for his various experiments and research, consisting mainly of feeding poisons and torturing. All kinds of experiments are carried out here daily.

After sundown, the Hidden Cloud Peak turns into a nightmarish hell.

And for those who die from his experiments, would be carted out in the dead of the night by the disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak and be buried within the herb beds, to lend nourishment to the growing herbs as fertiliser.

After being admitted into the Hidden Cloud Peak, unless they become a genuine disciple under Ke Cang Ju himself, they would not ever leave the Hidden Cloud Peak, not even after they died.

Those people were fated to never leave here alive, the moment they stepped into the Hidden Cloud Peak.

Jun Wu Xie listened intently to Hua Yao, her cold eyes lowered, as she pondered a moment. She suddenly raised her head and looked at Hua Yao to ask: “You can freely control your bones, can you change your body shape and looks?”

Hua Yao was shocked! And he seemed to realise what Jun Wu Xie was asking, but did not seem sure before he nodded.

Chapter 276: “Impersonation (2)”

“Kill Ke Cang Ju, and have you take his place.” Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes as she revealed her plan.

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu felt the shock reverberate through their entire beings.

They never would have expected that Jun Wu Xie would even think about killing Ke Cang Ju the very first night she entered the Hidden Cloud Peak!

Jun Wu Xie might have stated her objective for coming to the Qing Yun Clan was to wipe out the whole Qing Yun Clan. But wasn't the speed the plans were being carried out a tad bit too fast!?

“Can it be done?” Qiao Chu stared at Jun Wu Xie stunned, unable to accept such shocking ideas coming from the petite and refined looking youth before him.

Jun Wu Xie frowned.

Hua Yao replied instead: “How do you intend to do it? I might be able to change my bones' structure, but I am unable to transform my skin. Even if I am to change my facial bone structure to be exactly like Ke Cang Ju, I won't be able to replicate that face.”

“I have my ways.” Jun Wu Xie looked at Hua Yao, “You do not have to do anything else, but to wait here.”

Hua Yao stared at Jun Wu Xie a moment, as if guessing at her intentions. He decided not say anything further, and gave his silent consent.

The three young youths made their first pact of agreement in the dark, dank, and wet underground chamber. Their cooperation this time, was the start to the tangles that was destined to bind their lives.

At the earliest break of dawn, Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu left the underground chamber. Before they left, Jun Wu Xie witnessed Hua Yao drive the stakes into his body and hung himself back onto the hooks and bound himself to the chains.

He looked just as he had before they found him.

After a night of torment, the newly recruited youths were tired beyond words. Before Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu reached their quarters, they saw over twenty of the battered and exhausted youths leaning beside the water urns. At that moment, they seemed to have lost their spirit and energy, lying around like limp rag dolls, listless and limpid. Many of them were soaking wet and the buckets used to carry the water laid beside them, and they had no strength left to go on. Having gone hungry a whole day and night, the stomachs were growling furiously, and the night's hard labour and resulting exhaustion wringed every ounce of energy out from their bodies, and many of them had fallen asleep where they sat.

Jun Wu Xie's and Qiao Chu's arrival had not been noticed by anyone else and they conveniently picked a spot to sit down. Without anyone seeing, Jun Wu Xie pushed an elixir into the hands of Qiao Chu.

"What is this?" Qiao Chu looked at the greyish elixir in his hand, and then looked in puzzlement at Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie glanced at Qiao Chu but did not feel like explaining. She picked up the elixir from Qiao Chu's hand and slapped her hand onto Qiao Chu's mouth, sending the elixir down the his throat, and swallowed an elixir herself.

"....." The extremely bitter elixir slipped down his throat and brought tears to Qiao Chu's eyes. He grimaced in agony as he stared at Jun Wu Xie, and pinched on his own nose.

This kid was simply straightforward and brutal!

When the first rays of light spilled onto the lands, the exhausted youths were stirred back to consciousness by the blinding light. The figures picked themselves up wearily and wobbled unsteadily into their sleeping quarters.

They was nothing else they wanted more than to go back and sink into their beds, and drink a few mouthfuls of water to flush away the hunger pangs.

Not a single one of them was able to complete the task set to them, and according to what the Hidden Cloud Peak senior had said, they would not have any breakfast either.

A pity but the torment had not ended. Just when the new recruits were dragging themselves back into the quarters, they were stopped by the senior disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak who had just awoken.

Chapter 277: “Impersonation (3)”

“Have all of you finished it?” The fully refreshed disciple asked as he looked upon the group of wretched and exhausted youth, as an evil smile appeared on his lips.

The youths lowered their heads, unable to make a sound.

“What a bunch of losers! Since you can’t even complete such a simple task, you can forget about breakfast! Now, go and get the water from the urns and water the herb beds!” Without allowing the ravaged youths any chance to rest, more torment was being heaped upon them.

Howls of protests sounded from those youths then.

“Senior, we are dying from exhaustion, and did not sleep a wink last night..... Can we sleep just a little before we go?” A braver youth among them pleaded for them.

The next moment, as soon as those words had left his mouth, the Hidden Cloud Peak disciple rushed at him and kicked him hard in the stomach, making the weakened youth double over and fell onto the floor, howling in pain.

“What a lazy bunch! These rules in the Hidden Cloud Peak are meant to be followed once you are admitted! Anyone who refuses to follow them can pack up and leave!” The Hidden Cloud Peak disciple looked at every single one of them in disdain and gave a cold laugh, the cruel look in his eyes did not even see those new recruits as humans anymore.

Under threat and fear..... made these totally exhausted youths huddle together, unable to argue further. They dragged themselves to their feet and straggled outside.

The Hidden Cloud Peak did not allow any outsiders to enter, and hence, no one knew what went on behind their firmly closed doors.

There was no one to come save these sacrificial lambs about to be sent to slaughter.

“Say, if these guys knew they would be tortured to death by the Hidden Cloud Peak, would they still cling on so desperately to be admitted into the Hidden Cloud Peak?” Qiao Chu walked slowly out of the quarters and looked at the figures before him walking unsteadily, his eyes inquisitive.

Ke Cang Ju was a bad egg, but these scoundrels were no angels as well. When they had just come to the Hidden Cloud Peak, they had sneered and jeered at him and Jun Wu Xie. He doubted they had the energy to do that anymore.

Jun Wu Xie did not say anything. She lowered her eyes and looked at the ground before her feet.

A place like this, totally disgusted her every moment she was here.

And since it disgusted her that much, she would totally wipe the place out!

Qiao Chu waited for Jun Wu Xie to reply but she did not say a word. He then turned his head and suddenly saw that Jun Wu Xie’s pink cheeks had lost all colour, and her lips were deathly white!

“Jun Xie! You.....” Qiao Chu had just opened his mouth to speak when he suddenly felt the world spin around him. Before he could react, he involuntarily fell flat on his face onto the ground.

Two loud thuds alerted the youths who were walking before them. They turned their heads to see and found that the trailing pair of Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie had fainted, as they lay flat on the ground. They had shown no prior signs of fatigue but their faces were now deathly pale and the dry cracked lips were white!

“H..... help! Some people fainted!” Shouts erupted from the group of youths.

The Hidden Cloud Peak disciples were drawn to the noise and

they immediately spotted Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu lying at the side of the path the moment they stepped out.

For just a brief moment, a flash of malicious glee flashed within the eyes of the disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak, but it disappeared very soon after.

They put on an exasperated face thereafter and reprimanded with disdain at the group of youths: “What a useless bunch this is! They are falling to pieces after just one night in the Hidden Cloud Peak! Get some people here and bring these two useless pieces of thrash back to Elder Ke. I can’t believe they could be this hopeless! They are more trouble than they are worth and would only be a bother to the Elder!”

Their bumbling group of youths looked with uncertainty at what was happening here. According to the senior Hidden Cloud Peak disciples, they would be sent to Elder Ke for treatment, and they were suddenly comforted by the fact that the Elder of the Hidden Cloud Peak took a personal interest in the well being of their disciples.....

Chapter 278: “Impersonation (4)”

That must be true! The Hidden Cloud Peak would never torment them like this without reason. This must be a test for them! If they can hold out a little longer, they would soon become a true disciple of the Hidden Cloud Peak!

After they told themselves that they would be treated by the Elder himself if they were to fall ill, their earlier complaints of exhaustion seemed to evaporate into the air. Some of them even started to anticipate eagerly for their bodies to succumb to exhaustion and be subjected to the ‘treatment’ from Elder Ke, and pushed their bodies beyond their limits.

The fantasy that enveloped the naive youths gave them renewed strength and their ravaged bodies were suddenly able to move as the youths moved out determined to succeed.

“Dumb pieces of trash.” The Hidden Cloud Peak disciple muttered to himself as he stood at the entrance to the quarters, his eyes fixed on the naive sacrifices who were oblivious to the certain death that awaited them at the end of their disillusioned good fortune, as they trudged out to suffer further torment.

“Do we just send these two to the Elder?” A few Hidden Cloud Peak disciples walked over and kicked at the unmoving pair lying on the ground asked easily.

“Just send them up, I did not expect that there to be such weak ones among the sheep that would succumb to the torture on the very first night. They’re sure out of luck.” Without feeling any pity for the pair, two Hidden Cloud Peak disciples carried Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie, moving deeper into the peak.

As they made their way in, the disciples paid no attention to the injured pair and handled them roughly. After some time, they came before the same building that Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie had sneaked into last night.

The doors to the building were open and the guards at the doors allowed the disciples in without stopping them when the guards saw them carrying the two injured over their shoulders.

After they entered, Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie were thrown like sacks onto the hard floor.

With a boom, the doors to the building were then closed.

Qiao Chu lay flat on the ground, his face stuck to the dirty floor, his pale face in a grimace.

Will somebody tell him what was happening to him?

Why did he suddenly faint? What scared him more was that after he collapsed, he had remained conscious, and heard every single word of the conversation between the senior disciples. And no matter how hard he tried, he could not move a finger.

He had remained conscious, and his half closed eyes had allowed him to see everything that was going on. But he just could not..... move!

What kind of an elixir did Jun Xie give him? Why is he in such a state?

As Qiao Chu was feeling helpless and confused on the hard floor, he suddenly noticed a little shadow that suddenly flashed past before his eyes. The shadow nimbly jumped across the room and finally stopped before a shelf filled with medicinal jars.

It was a graceful little black cat, and its chest was decorated with a brilliant crest of gold!

The little black cat noticed Qiao Chu eyes as it licked its paws slowly and swished its tail lazily, before it jumped up to hide behind the jars of medicine.

Time passed, before the doors to the building were opened again. The sun shone in through the doors and lit the dim room with its light. A crooked figure shuffled to stand before the doors into the

room, the light shining behind him.

“Stay alert and watch carefully, I do not want any disturbances.” An evil chilling voice was heard, one that made anyone feel like they were dipped into the icy cold water of a winter lake.

Before the comforting sunlight could warm the cold hard floor, the doors to the room were shut tight once again!

The sharp jingle of bells sounded in the ears of Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu, and the sound gradually came closer to the two figures lying motionless upon the ground. The jingles of bells beat at their thumping hearts, its rhythm in tandem with their heartbeats.

Chapter 279: “Fifth Slap (1)”

Ke Cang Ju stood, his back hunched and his eyes narrowed as he stared at the two youths, his darkened lips curled in a cruel arc. He shook his hands and two lengths of chains slipped out from his voluminous sleeves. He secured the chains around the bellies of Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie, and dragged the unconscious pair towards the underground chamber.

After he left, a nimble black shadow slipped from behind the medicinal jars upon the shelf and followed, its small body blended into the darkness easily as it dove into the tunnel leading down into the chamber.

In the deep underground chamber, the nauseating smell of blood permeated throughout, mixed with the strong smell of herbs that assaulted one’s sense of smell.

The crisply clear jingle of the bells followed Ke Cang Ju as he shuffled forward, and the two Hidden Cloud Peak disciples who were busying themselves within the underground chamber immediately dropped the tasks at hand and went up to Ke Cang Ju when they heard him coming.

“Master.” The two disciples bowed respectfully.

Ke Cang Ju released the chains around Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu and said to the two disciples: “Bring them over.”

“Yes, Master.”

The disciples picked up the two youths and carried them over to the raised wooden platforms at the side.

Two loud thuds sounded as the youths were thrown carelessly upon the wooden boards.

“Clean them up properly. I have new drugs to test on them.” Ke Cang Ju let out a spine chilling cackle as he turned to walk further inside.

Within the dimly lit underground chamber, the torches flickered, and the pretty faced youth hung from the wall, his face pale. He was not moving, and it seemed as though he could be dead.

Ke Cang Ju lifted a water scoop from a bucket and splashed it heavily upon the youth.

The icy cold water woke the unconscious youth and he raised his head slowly, his eyes glinted with a trace of hatred, the tiny teardrop mole below his eye showing clearly on his face.

“I can see you are still very spirited. That’s good. Let’s play a different game today.” Ke Cang Ju cackled maliciously, and pulled a thin cane from a bucket filled with a black gooey liquid. The cane was soaked through with the black liquid and it glistened darkly within the dim firelight, and thorns were embedded throughout its length.

This youth was from the previous batch of new recruits brought into the Hidden Cloud Peak last month. All the others from the same batch that had been brought in had already died under his hands. This youth had possessed exceptional life force and his vitality had far surpassed all the others. Even after more than two weeks’ torture, he had remained alive.

The cane soaked in the poisonous black liquid was slashed upon the youth’s tall slender body, every stroke left glaringly gashing red wounds as the thorns dug into his flesh. The black poison liquid stuck to the wounds and the red bloody gashes soon turned a dark purple.

“This is the poisonous cane that grows only on the Eastern Spirit Mountain, I collected and immersed them in the juice of the Heart Eroding Grass. The poisonous cane’s barbed hooks might be sharp, but were rather brittle. They break off easily after just a few uses and lose its effectiveness. But when it is soaked in the juice of the Heart Eroding Grass, it hardens and strengthens the barbed hooks, making them unbelievably strong and increases its poisonous

qualities greatly.” As he continued lashing, Ke Cang Ju was immersed in his ‘teaching’ as he rattled on with his hoarse voice.

“The best thing about it is, the poison is not lethal enough to kill, but will induce unbearable pain and agony in the human body. The wounds it leaves behind will feel like thousands of ants biting away at the flesh. Hua Yao, have you remembered everything your Master had so painstakingly prepared for your lesson today?” The cane slashed mercilessly within the dim chamber, and Ke Cang Ju’s eyes grew crazed, his face contorted in glee, and his breaths grew shorter as he got more and more excited.

Chapter 280: “Fifth Slap (2)”

The youth took on the slashes without uttering a single sound with his head lowered, as he clenched his jaw tight. Within the pair of pretty eyes, they did not show any trace of fear or terror, but flashed with a chill and showed defiant calm.

The endless cracks from the cane echoed throughout the underground chamber while the two disciples outside lowered their heads as they began to “prepare” the two newly arrived sacrificial sheep.

“That kid in there can really take it, he’s actually still alive!” One of the disciples said indifferently, having gotten used to the daily tortuous experiments that happened daily in the underground chamber, and Hua Yao was the only one to still survive after more than ten days under the malicious hands of Ke Cang Ju. Before him, none had managed to last that long.

Forget ten days, none had lasted more than even five days! Basically, any of the new recruits sent here mostly die in three days and even if they miraculously survived, an outcome worse than death awaited them. Their vision and voices would be snatched away from them, becoming blind and mute, unable to utter a single word of protest or curse and immersed in the urns that were filled to the brim with poison. Death was actually a relief for these people.

“I took a look at him earlier this morning, he would not last much longer.” The other disciple replied without any expression.

“I wonder how long these two sheep here would last, two days? Or three days..... This kid here had looked rather thin, but he is actually rather muscular.” The disciple exclaimed as he cut up Qiao Chu’s clothes. Under the tattered tunic, his firm muscular chest glistened under the dim flickering torches, as the disciple admired for a little longer before he reached out his hand and stroked Qiao

Chu's chest when he could not resist it any longer. The disciple, absorbed in his admiration and the feeling that lingered on his fingertips, had not noticed that the sacrificial sheep that laid there, had seemed to shiver from his touch.

The other disciple pouted at his partner's luck as he stared at the petite and skinny specimen of a boy before him, and was about to begin with his task in disdain.

"I don't know about yours, but this one here, should be lucky if he could even last through today."

As he spoke, he picked up the blade, raised his hand and was about to cut through the clothes when his hand was back in mid action.

The disciple froze, the shock paralyzing him a moment, as he looked in disbelief at the small hand that was gripped on his wrist!

That hand, belonged to the little brat that lay before him.

"Little Black." Jun Wu Xie, who had been unconscious just a second ago suddenly snapped her cold and chilling eyes open, and with a low call, a massive black shadow had suddenly appeared in the underground chamber!

The two disciples had been rather laid back and relaxed when suddenly, they spotted the big black beast, but it had pounced on them from within the shadows fast as lightning before they could react and pinned them firmly onto the ground!

How did such a huge beast get into this underground chamber?

And they had not even noticed anything at all!

The daggers that they held within their hands had dropped on the ground when the massive beast had pounced on them, and it held them both down under a paw each pressed against their necks, its sharp claws digging into their carotid artery. A little more pressure, and the beast would have taken their lives!

Everything had happened too fast, and they only glimpsed a massive shadow before they found themselves pinned, and were unable to react in the slightest.

“Hear them utter one word and kill them.” The cold clear voice sounded in the ears of the two Hidden Cloud Peak disciples and their eyes widened in fear when they saw where the voice had come from.

A small petite figure sat up slowly on the wooden platform unhurriedly. The small youth who had been unconscious just moments ago now sat there looking at them with eyes that sent a chill deep into their bones as they lay on the floor, not daring to move a muscle.

Gulp.

Chapter 281: “Fifth Slap (3)”

Jun Wu Xie stood up and glanced at the two daggers lying on the floor near her feet. Her cold gaze shifted as she turned and came to stand beside Qiao Chu. She then pried his mouth open and popped an elixir into it.

The next moment, the rigid figure lying upon the wooden platform jumped up suddenly and Qiao Chu screamed!

“Disgusting!!! Ptui!!” Qiao Chu stood pulling at his cut up clothes and both his hands wiped his chest furiously till his skin turned red and sore.

‘Damn! He was just caressed by a man!’

‘Was that idiot a pervert!?’

The images of him being caressed by that perverted trash when he was fully conscious but was unable to move made Qiao Chu lose his mind! He walked single mindedly towards that despicable face that made him boil over with rage and stood next to the black beast, his eyes burning with unbridled anger!

The black beast hesitated and blinked at the fuming Qiao Chu, and cast a confused glance at Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie nodded slightly.

And the black beast lifted its right paw.

The same moment that the black beast lifted its paw, the relieved disciple took a deep breath, but found himself lifted in the air by a raging Qiao Chu who exploded in the very next second!

“Keep it down.” Jun Wu Xie shot Qiao Chu a look of warning.

Qiao Chu flipped his hand and covered it over the mouth of the disciple who was about to scream and pressed him onto the ground. With his free hand, he clenched it into a fist and rained heavy punches, pummeling away to vent out the disgust and

frustration within!

The disciple could not escape from the hand covering his mouth nor break free from Qiao Chu as he struggled his hardest to escape. However, the thin frame of Qiao Chu hid surprising strength that could rival Drunk Lotus as he held the disciple down with one hand and pummeled away with his other, ravaging the face under his fist!

The other Hidden Cloud Peak disciple still pinned under the black beast was forced to watch on as his compatriot was hammered into a bloody mess, his bones almost completely broken all over, and he himself began to shiver.

Only when the man breathed his last, did Qiao Chu release him. He slowly stood up, wiped his blood covered fist on his tattered clothes, and said with a frown: "These were my best clothes! And now they're ruined too!"

"Say, Little Xie, what did you feed me with anyway? I could not move a muscle at all!" Qiao Chu decided that he would never want to go through that again. When Ke Cang Ju had appeared, he had wanted to punch him then, but his body refused to move a single inch, until Jun Wu Xie popped the second elixir into him before he regained the movement of his limbs and body.

"The act must be complete." Jun Wu Xie said softly, as she eyed the other Hidden Cloud Peak disciple under the black beast's paw.

The disciple noticed Jun Wu Xie's eyes on him and he started to shiver more violently and he stared at Jun Wu Xie in fear, shaking his head, in a silent plea for his life.

"Kill." Jun Wu Xie commanded.

Before he could make a noise, the black beast bit through his neck. His face was still frozen, with a look of horror upon it.

With the two disciples dealt with, Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu proceeded deeper into the underground chamber.

In there, the “lesson of the day” for Hua Yao was still ongoing, with Ke Cang Ju “teaching”. Totally immersed in his instruction of his students, he suddenly noticed a reaction for his student. The pretty youth under torture finally raised his head, his eyes bright, staring straight in front of him.

“Finally? You’ve reached your limit?” Ke Cang Ju cackled, and his evil laughter echoed in the underground chamber. All this time, Hua Yao had not shown the slightest reaction to the numerous torture inflicted upon him, but finally, his eyes had changed. Did this mean that the boy can finally no longer bear up under his ingenuity?

Chapter 282: “Fifth Slap (4)”

“If you beg me, I might just consider lessening your agony. After all, a disciple like you, is someone I greatly favour.” Ke Cang Ju sneered with a cackling laugh. He absolutely loved it when he saw these beautiful blooming flowers of youth, struggle to live and succumb in the end under the torment of his making, to wilt and finally die.

When pain and fear overtook them, especially when their fair supple flesh of youth were torn and shredded, it had always made excitement surge up within and gave him a twisted sense of satisfaction.

Hua Yao was undoubtedly, among all the “disciples” he had recruited, the one who had the most outstanding looks. When he had first laid eyes on this pretty youth that stirred his heart, his soul had roared to rip apart the pretty face before him, to use poison to rot the bones beneath those distinctly sharp and prominent features, to destroy and grind into the mud, the beauty that was shamelessly being flaunted, stinging his eyes and gnawed at his soul.

“Too slow.” The pretty youth, with a trail of blood flowing down the corner of his mouth, said suddenly, slowly.

Ke Cang Ju paused, not understanding what Hua Yao had meant by those words.

“I thought you were enjoying what the hideous monster had specially prepared for you.” A clear carefree voice suddenly sounded out behind Ke Cang Ju!

Ke Cang Ju turned immediately and looked in puzzlement at the two youths standing just steps away from him!

Weren’t these two boys unconscious and barely alive just moments ago?

“Yucks! At this close distance, your face looks absolutely ugly and disgusting!” Qiao Chu held his hand to his mouth in mock terror, taunting the shocked Ke Cang Ju.

“Ugly!? Who are you calling ugly? You imbecile!” Ke Cang Ju’s face contorted in rage.

All his life, Ke Cang Ju had absolutely hated anyone to talk about his looks. And because of that, he had hated any male he came across who were blessed with good looks, and not even children, were spared from his wrath!

This pipsqueak here, dared to call him ugly to his face!?

He could not wait to shred him into a thousand pieces!

Ke Cang Ju made his move immediately, unable to contain his rage, as three dark cold glints shot towards Qiao Chu’s vitals!

At the same moment that Ke Cang Ju made his move, streaks of silver flashed and stopped the three dark glints in mid flight!

Clink! Clink! Clink!

Three clinks sounded successively!

The moment the silver streaks had clashed into the dark glints, three black needles and three silver needles clattered to the floor, glinting under the flickering torches.

Ke Cang Ju’s eyes widened in amazement, staring in disbelief at the unremarkable youth before him.

His poison needles had never failed him before, even when he had used them on an unsuspecting indigo level spirit user and taken him down. But this youth here actually stopped all three of his poison needles after he made his move!? What surprised him more was after he saw that the silver needles that had stopped his dark poison ones were smaller in weight and size!

He had shot out the needles discreetly without holding back. How did the youth detect and reacted within the split second to

stopped his dark needles in their tracks!?

He squinted to take a good look at the youth, and that look gave him a great shock when he realised the youth standing at the side was the very same youth that he had snatched right from under Mu Chen's nose!

Ke Cang Ju hated good looking youths, and the better looking they were, it brought about a greater hatred. Hence, every month, when he picked from the candidates who failed to be accepted into the Qing Yun Clan, he had always chosen the slightly better looking ones. He usually did not pay attention to ones like Jun Wu Xie, small in build, facial features though delicate, but not outstanding. He had forcibly snatched Jun Wu Xie from right under Mu Chen's eyes because he hated Mu Chen's youth and his good looks, but was unable to do much more against Mu Chen, when they were both Elders of the Qing Yun Clan.

Compared to Jun Wu Xie, the tall slender youth standing next to him looked more appetising to Ke Cang Ju, as he stirred a greater amount of hatred within, with his better looks.

Chapter 283: “Fifth Slap (5)”

Jun Wu Xie, who had been admitted into the Hidden Cloud Peak just to spite Mu Chen, currently became a great shock to Ke Cang Ju.

The youth’s skills and precision with flying needles were on par with him!

How was that possible?

Ke Cang Ju had been unstoppable with his hidden flying poison dark needles in sneak attacks. His discreet attacks on unsuspecting opponents had taken down many senior high leveled spirit experts, and it had failed on a young pipsqueak of a youth here?

The fact remained though, that Jun Wu Xie had done it!

“You really..... disgust me.” Jun Wu Xie, who had remained silent all this time, furrowed her brow, as the image of Ke Cang Ju standing before her, duplicated with her memory of the demonic figure of her past life, who declared in the name of research, and carried out unspeakable cruelty and horrors. People like them, must not be allowed to live at all!

Under that cold gaze, Ke Cang Ju could feel a chill from his feet running up through his bent and crooked body.

It was an insult to him that a gaze from a little brat could send shivers through him!

“You brat! Such a filthy mouth! It does not matter who you are, but once you set foot onto Hidden Cloud Peak, do not even think of stepping out alive!” Ke Cang Ju cackled with forced bravado, refusing to believe that the two little kids could cause so much of a stir here!

The Hidden Cloud Peak was his domain!

“Can you stop me?” Jun Wu Xie lifted her face, and the corners

of her mouth curled into a devilish smile.

The unremarkable face was somehow transformed by that devilish smile that surfaced into a beautiful face!

“Try me and you’ll find out! Rest assured, I will allow you to live longer than the rest, to fully savour the torment I will prepare just for you!” Ke Cang Ju’s evil cackle rang shrilly, as the unbridled hatred broke loose when he saw the beautiful face with the devilish smile on Jun Wu Xie.

All beautiful things, must be totally destroyed!

Qiao Chu stood there, a frown on his face. He had wanted to rush in and teach that malicious hideous monster a lesson.

But Jun Xie had suddenly raised a hand and stopped him in his tracks.

“Stand back.” Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes, her smile growing more radiant.

Qiao Chu paused in hesitation. He felt that the Jun Xie before him was a different person. He was obviously smiling so radiantly, but that smile had sent chills through his body. That unnerving feeling made Qiao Chu submit to Jun Wu Xie’s command, and he took a step back.

“Kid, you are looking to die.” Ke Cang Ju did not think Jun Wu Xie was a threat. It was just a kid before him, and even if he possessed surpassing abilities, it did not matter to him. Ke Cang Ju’s prowess was not in his fighting capabilities, but from his expertise in poison!

Poison that killed his enemies unknowingly, without form!

Under the skies, no one was more familiar than him, how to kill with poison. When he wanted it, he could kill anyone, anytime, to die not knowing what had killed him!

“With just two brats like you, you have no chance. Within the

Hidden Cloud Peak, not even a contingent of soldiers can take me down. You will only find death before you, and soon, you will find out what true agony is!” Ke Cang Ju’s face twisted grotesquely as he smiled, and his hideous face became horrifying to look at, looking like a ghastly repulsive monster just climbed out from the abyss!

The bronze bells at the end of his robes rang loudly and plumes of green smoke emitted from the bells as it permeated and spread throughout the chamber.

As the green smoke rose, Hua Yao who was still suspended on the wall, showed rare shock on his face when he had been calm even under torture. His voice panicked, he suddenly shouted: “Go! Get away quick! That is poisonous Lone Smoke!”

Ke Cang Ju’s cackling laughter rang out maniacally as he stood with his arms outstretched, staring viciously at Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu.

“Trash of the lower realm, you should feel honoured to die under the deadly lethal Lone Smoke!”

Chapter 284: “Fifth Slap (5)”

Ke Cang Ju stared at Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu, his eyes narrowed with malice. He knew better than anyone how lethal the Lone Smoke was. The poison manifests itself as smoke, and even if people held their breaths, the poison would still permeate into the body through the skin at the slightest touch.

The underground chamber was relatively sealed and in this enclosed space, there was nowhere for his two prey to escape!

The Lone Smoke swirled and covered every inch of the underground chamber. The two brats were as good as dead. This poison could even kill a whole contingent of soldiers!

Enjoy every ounce of agony! Within this inescapable prison, quiver in fear as death comes to claim both of you!

Ke Cang Ju face was looking more sinister as his smile grew wider. He longed to see the two impertinent youths fall before him, and cower at his feet.

Qiao Chu had at his first chance, pulled on Jun Wu Xie's elbow, when the words “Lone Smoke” had raised the hair on the back of his neck.

“Run! The Lone Smoke is deadly lethal! The slightest contact with the smoke will kill you!” Qiao Chu pulled at Jun Wu Xie as he shouted, his face pale with fright.

He did not expect Ke Cang Ju to possess something as lethal as the Lone Smoke.

Qiao Chu pulled frantically but found that he had not moved an inch. He turned around and saw Jun Xie staring coldly at Ke Cang Ju, still smiling radiantly.

“Jun Xie? Let's go!” Qiao Chu looked on perplexed, almost wanting to just carry her up and run from the poison.

“This is Lone Smoke?” Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow, as her mouth parted in laughter, her eyes devoid of any fear. She stared calmly into the green smoke that swirled around her, as she would at ordinary smoke.

Qiao Chu froze, as he looked at Jun Xie, thinking whether the kid had lost his mind. Shouldn't the first reaction of a normal person when they encountered lethal poison smoke be to run? But this lunatic here was just standing there, refusing to budge, staring into it, and smiling, like it was entertainment!?

Ke Cang Ju's horrifying smile started to fade, “You brats, people who are able to die under the Lone Smoke in the Lower Realm number few and far between. For me to use such precious poison to send you to hell, you should be feeling honoured.”

If the brat's face had not shown him such a radiant and beautiful smile, he would not have used such rare and precious lethal Lone Smoke on them. But to be able to appreciate their faces twisted in agony before they died under the Lone Smoke, it would have been all worth it.

As he saw the poison swirl and spread further, Ke Cang Ju could not contain the excitement that surged within him. The Lone Smoke had enveloped Jun Xie and tendrils of the poison caressed her skin. It would not be long, before these arrogant brats turn into a pile of bones!

“Precious?” Jun Wu Xie laughed, as she would at a good joke. She tilted her head and looked at the smoke that continued to swirl around her, and the chill in her eyes grew colder.

“If you find such insignificant toys of yours precious, I will show you something better.” Jun Wu Xie's words reflected her amusement and she stepped forward, and flicked her sleeves, dispelling the smoke before her.

“How can you still be alright?” Ke Cang Ju's face froze in shock. The Lone Smoke had definitely reached her and engulfed her

entire body! Why was there no reaction?

That could not be possible!

The deadly Lone Smoke should have caused an immediate reaction upon any contact with the body, and how could the brat still be fine?

“You want to harm me with play toys for children? Stop kidding me.” Jun Wu Xie said coldly.

Chapter 285: “Fifth Slap (7)”

Jun Wu Xie’s words left every single one of them dumbfounded, even Qiao Chu and Hua Yao were shocked.

When Ke Cang Ju had released the Lone Smoke earlier, both of them had pushed their spirit powers out from their bodies and created a protective shield around themselves. Although it could not totally keep the Lone Smoke out, it could at least slow down the poison’s effects on them.

Even so, Qiao Chu and Hua Yao were not in very good shape. Wherever the Lone Smoke had seeped through and came into contact with their skin, it burned and felt like flames were licking them, as a stinging pain was felt. Their spirit powers could not completely keep the Lone Smoke out and their skin turned a glaring shade of red and the burn spreaded to attack their vital organs, engulfing them in burning agony.

But not Jun Wu Xie, she stood unaffected, her face not showing any signs of discomfort.

The stark contrast almost made Ke Cang Ju’s eyes pop out of his head.

Ke Cang Ju’s smile twisted as the corners of his mouth twitched. He stared intensely at Jun Wu Xie, trying to find any signs of the poison’s effects on her body.

The result made him slump in despair. From head to toe, there was not a mark on Jun Wu Xie. What surprised him more was that she did not even use any spiritual powers to protect herself, she just allowed the Lone Smoke to engulf her completely before Ke Cang Ju’s eyes, standing calm and defiant.

“Impossible.....” Ke Cang Ju stared woodenly at Jun Wu Xie, unable to believe his own eyes.

The Lone Smoke was infallible, and Qiao Chu’s and Hua Yao’s

reactions further ascertained that fact.

What was allowing a young brat like this to remain immune to the Lone Smoke?

“You have the antidote?” Ke Cang Ju asked of Jun Wu Xie through gritted teeth. Unless she had previously taken the antidote, no one who possessed anything below the purple leveled spirit can escape from the deadly Lone Smoke! With Jun Wu Xie’s young age, she could not possibly have attained a purple spirit!

“Antidote?” Jun Wu Xie laughed and shook her head, and her cold eyes looked at Ke Cang Ju in amusement.

“You just refuse to give up and continue to play dumb? Nothing as insignificant as this would harm me in the slightest. Just give it up.”

Jun Wu Xie stepped towards Ke Cang Ju, as the green smoke churned with her passing.

Ke Cang Ju’s face paled, and he flicked his voluminous sleeves. Several black poisoned needles flew at Jun Wu Xie, and seemingly at the same moment, Jun Wu Xie had raised a hand and cold white flashes streaked from her fingers. The clash of needles brought the needles clattering to the floor.

“Don’t you have anything new?”

The needles laid upon the floor, useless, and not a single one could even get close to Jun Wu Xie’s body.

Her lightning quick reflexes surprised even Hua Yao and Qiao Chu who watched in amazement at Jun Wu Xie’s unexpected calm.

She did not use an ounce of spiritual power but was able to throw out her needles with such speed and precision.

Where was this kid from!?

Ke Cang Ju’s darkened at that moment.

The Lone Smoke had been his trump card, but it was useless

against the brat. His trusted poison needles were not as fast as Jun Wu Xie's silver needles.

Ke Cang Ju had witnessed his needles stopped two times, and was certain that the brat could really bring him down with those silver needles alone!

His own affirmation made Ke Cang Ju break out in cold sweat. Within the Hidden Cloud Peak that was his to command, he found himself feeling an oppressive pressure pressing over him, making it hard for him to breathe!

This brat's speed and precision was unbelievable!

How old was he? How could this be!?

Chapter 286: “Fifth Slap (8)”

Never in his worst nightmares had Ke Cang Ju ever dreamt that he would be overpowered by a mere brat, pushed to the point like this. He watched in horror as Jun Wu Xie closed the distance between them. And with every approaching step, Ke Cang Ju cringed. He flung his hands out in desperation, as puffs of smokes in various dark shades of colours sprayed towards Jun Wu Xie!

He had lived all his life with the firm belief he had in his poisons, and that brat would be no exception to the countless opponents that had died under them!

Even if the most deadly Lone Smoke had no effect, the other myriad fatal poisons he held hidden within his sleeves must have one that would kill the kid!

However, Jun Wu Xie continued forward, not even blinking, stepping through the heavily poisoned clouds of smoke that swirled around her, her cold chilling eyes shining through the dense poisonous fog.

Those eyes held nothing but utter contempt!

“Are you finished?” Jun Wu Xie asked impatiently, after seeing Ke Cang Ju’s desperate attempt to throw everything he had at his disposal right onto her.

Ke Cang Ju looked at Jun Wu Xie, and words seems to fail him at that moment. The successive gusts of smoke he released had contained tens of different lethal poisons from all over the world. Even the strongest of fighters would have fallen under his incessant onslaught with the copious amount of poison he had released.

Nevertheless, Jun Wu Xie still stood, unaffected, and her radiant smile only seemed to him, to be mocking at his weakness and hideous looks.

“I can’t believe Unbelievable.....” Ke Cang Ju fell back a step, his face taking on a deathly pallor.

He had grown up hideous, his veins and arteries deformed and incomplete, and hence his contractual ring spirit had not even awoken. He cursed the heavens at the injustice, and delved headlong, committing his whole life to the study of poison. Even without the strength given by spirit powers, without a mighty contractual ring spirit, he carved out his own path with poison, to kill all who despised and went against him.

But now, his vision had been shattered, by a young boy before him.

His prized poisons that had been his pride and joy, were now a joke to Jun Wu Xie. The study and research that he had committed his whole life to, could not even harm a single strand of hair on Jun Wu Xie.

How did she overcome his life’s work so easily!?

“If you are finished, then it’s my turn next.” Jun Wu Xie’s smile widened and she retrieved a grey porcelain bottle from a cloth bag on her.

Ke Cang Ju’s eyes were fixed intently on the bottle within Jun Wu Xie’s hands, as though a ferocious beast was trapped within it.

When Jun Wu Xie poured out a tiny elixir the size of her little finger’s nail, Ke Cang Ju heaved a sigh of relief.

Ke Cang Ju had expected for a boy seemingly totally immune to the myriad poisons he released, to counter with a more fearsome and deadly poison. But the boy had instead produced a common pill, and judging by its outlook, Ke Cang Ju was certain that that was just a Bone Rotting Pill.

The Bone Rotting Pill was highly poisonous and deadly, and when ingested, the bones within the person’s body will quickly start to rot and decay. To the common man, this poison was

frighteningly lethal, but to Ke Cang Ju, it could not be something more common to him.

The Bone Rotting Pill was one of the products of his whole life's work in the study and research of poison. And most of the Qing Yun Clan's disciples would even carry a couple of them on them at all times.

The impertinent brat actually had the cheek to try to intimidate him with his own Bone Rotting Pill? That was a joke! With every kind of poison that he produced, he had researched its contents intensively and knew everything about them. He had taken all precautions to ingest the antidotes to provide him immunity from them. No matter how much of his own poison he took, they would not have any effects on him.

“Kid, do you know where that Bone Rotting Pill you hold in your hand had originated from?” Ke Cang Ju suddenly wanted to laugh, to laugh at his own uncalled for anxiety over the boy. The boy's immunity to his poisons had greatly surprised him, and besides that, he was just like any other ordinary boy. He must have been too shocked, and allowed panic to overcome him. Now that he had calmed down, he realised that he was not in that much of a danger.

Chapter 287: “Fifth Slap (9)”

Just moments ago, the needles the brat had shot out from his hands had been just common silver needles, and had contained not a trace of poison. Useless needles such as these, as long as they did not pierce into a vital spot, would not be able to cause him any harm.

Ke Cang Ju might not be confident of avoiding all of Jun Wu Xie's needles, he was sure that he could avoid them from hitting any vital spots.

The brat was immune to the poison, but it seemed his companions were not that lucky!

Ke Cang Ju cast his eyes onto the wavering Qiao Chu behind Jun Wu Xie.

Qiao Chu had released his spirit powers to shield his body, but it was not enough to stop the Lone Smoke completely, and Qiao Chu was beginning to waver as he stood, and the skin over all over his body was glaringly red, showing the exact symptoms of having been poisoned by the Lone Smoke.

Soon, Qiao Chu would be on his last breathes.

Besides his horrifying poison, Ke Cang Ju had no other fighting abilities. If he were to be engaged in a melee with a strong spirit user, he would not last a heartbeat.

But standing before him, the young boy had no strong ring spirit, and did not seem to have attained any high level spiritual powers himself as well. At his age, even if his ring spirit had awoken, his spiritual powers should still be struggling at the red level. A tiny red leveled spirit user posed no real threat to him.

Ke Cang Ju justified and cleared his fears and doubts, and a smile crept back only his face.

Jun Wu Xie noticed the change in Ke Cang Ju's expression and

looked at the poison in her hand before she said: “So you call this Bone Rotting Pill?”

Jun Wu Xie’s question only served to reinforce Ke Cang Ju’s suspicion that the brat did not have any terrifying poison in his possession. If he was that well versed with poison, shouldn’t he have recognised the Bone Rotting Pill? An ignorant kid that couldn’t even identify the Bone Rotting Pill would not possess anything that posed a threat to him, and only stood up to him based on his body that was immune to poison!

With that belief, Ke Cang Ju regained his arrogance and sinister expression.

“Kid, you dare bring my own poison before me to intimidate me? How naive and ignorant.”

“Your own poison?” Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow. Suddenly she waved her hand forward and called out: “Little Black!”

A massive black shadow streaked forward from behind Qiao Chu, and it pounced onto Ke Cang Ju who had just regained his confidence a moment ago.

Ke Cang Ju could not even react in time to dodge and found himself knocked backwards by a brutally overwhelming force and fell onto the ground. When he recovered from the shock and the pain, he found himself helplessly pinned under a black beast’s massive paws upon his shoulders, rendering him immobile. Before his eyes, was a massive black beast’s slavering jaws, its razor sharp fangs glinting under the dim firelight!

His newly restored arrogance melted away in that instant, torn to shreds by the black beast upon him, the expression on his face replaced with one of sheer terror.

“You claim this is your own work, why don’t you try it on yourself?” Jun Wu Xie walked over slowly keeping herself on the side. That man was too filthy and if she were to touch him in the

slightest, she would be so disgusted that she would want to skin herself, hence, she had made little black cat to do it for her.

Jun Wu Xie gestured to the black beast and the beast gave a ear splitting roar before it kicked its hind paw on the belly of Ke Cang Ju!

Ke Cang Ju screamed under the pain and with his mouth opened, Jun Wu Xie flicked her wrist and threw the tiny Bone Rotting Pill into the opened mouth. Little black cat immediately lifted its paw and pressed on the chest of Ke Cang Ju, forcing him to gasp and swallow the pill down his throat and into his belly.

Once the pill was swallowed, the black beast got off from Ke Cang Ju in disgust.

Ke Cang Ju sat up gasping heavily, holding his chest in pain, as he stared maliciously at Jun Wu Xie.

Chapter 288: “Fifth Slap (10)”

“The Bone Rotting Pill has no effect on me! Stop wasting any more of my time! Even if you manage to kill me here, Qin Yue will not spare any of you here! Do not think you can still step out of the Qing Yun Clan alive!” Ke Cang Ju said venomously to Jun Wu Xie.

“Really? Is that so?” Jun Wu Xie replied smiling.

Jun Wu Xie’s reply made Ke Cang Ju uneasy somehow but the black beast did not make any threatening moves and remained still.

Did that mean the kid would not kill him?

As Ke Cang Ju contemplated, he suddenly felt a burning sensation on his face. He held his hands to his face as the burning intensified. His face suddenly felt warm and wet under his fingers!?

He held out his hands and looked at them in shock, and saw his hands covered in blood. The dark blood covered both of his hands and he watched in horror as a piece of flesh fell onto his hands before him!

“Arghhhh!” A horrified scream erupted from Ke Cang Ju’s throat as he realised that the flesh was falling off from his face in pieces. His whole face was like molten lava, and the pain that assaulted him was unbearable.

“My face.....! My face.....!” The consuming pain drove Ke Cang Ju to his knees, and he crawled away in horror, wanting to hide his terrifying ordeal from people, as flesh and blood continued to fall. Ke Cang Ju made for a disgusting sight in the underground chamber then.

He had been born hideous, but he was nevertheless still a human. Ke Cang Ju could not imagine the horrifying fate he would have to face if his looks were to be further destroyed. It would be more

merciful to just kill him now.

As ugly as he thought himself to be, Ke Cang Ju treasured his twisted features and looks. The slightest blemish or knick suffered on his face was an unbearable ordeal.

No one went up to stop Ke Cang Ju. Jun Wu Xie stood unmoving, her cold eyes staring as Ke Cang Ju scrambled and crawled to a basin of water on one side.

He looked just like a stinky bug, skittering across the floor, disgusting and nauseating.

When Ke Cang Ju got to the basin, he exerted all his strength to clamour up and kneeling, peered into the water. What met his eyes then, caused him to freeze in position, as shock ran through his entire being!

The rotting mess of flesh had disappeared completely and underneath the streaks of blood that remained, was smooth and fair skin. His puffy and saggy eyebags were gone, which had previously squeezed his eyes almost completely shut. He saw a pair of startling sparkling eyes, looking back at him in the reflection, in total disbelief at the face staring back at him.

‘This is me?’

‘Me???’

The man in the reflection, might not be described as handsome, but he was at least slightly good looking with even features. Compared to the hideous face he was used to seeing, this blood smeared face was exceptionally attractive to him.

At that moment, Ke Cang Ju forgot all the pain that wrecked his face, as he stared obsessively at his new face!

“This is me..... I..... I am so good looking.....” Ke Cang Ju cackled maniacally, he had lived his whole life deeply immersed in his hatred of other people’s good looks, and his jealousy had been due to his own hideous countenance.

All of that disappeared at that moment, as untold joy seeped into that cold unfeeling heart!

He had become handsome, that euphoric ecstasy drove any feeling of pain away from his mind.

When the last rotting piece of flesh had dropped off from his now flawless face, the eyes of the reflection on the water's surface shone brilliantly with obsession and glee.

So obsessed was Ke Cang Ju that he did not notice Jun Wu Xie, who had been standing at the same spot all this while, had eyes that suddenly turned icy, glinting with frost.

Chapter 289: “Beauty’s Facade (1)”

“Like what you see?” Jun Wu Xie asked suddenly, her voice exceptionally chillingly cold and it echoed within the underground chamber, sounding rather unreal.

Ke Cang Ju’s face parted in a smile, his eyes almost fanatic, and he did not hear what Jun Wu Xie said at all. He stared at the reflection, unable to tear his eyes away from the image, and lifted a shivering hand to gently wipe away the streaks of blood on that flawless face.

Beauty like this, cannot be allowed to be marred in any way.

He wiped off the blood gently, little by little, all the time marveling at his own exceptional good looks.

Suddenly, the reflection on the water’s surface showed a split on the handsome face. The paper thin skin cracked, and blood poured out from the split on that face!

“NO! NO! DON’T! DOONN’T!!!” Ke Cang Ju looked at the face in the water that had been flawless just a moment ago, as more splits appeared a little by little, and the look in those eyes turned from marvel to one of unbelievable horror. He held up his hands to his face trying in vain to hold the flesh together.

It was futile, and absolutely impossible. Ke Cang Ju’s skin on his face then was just like the skin stretched over a drum, and the paper thin skin was unable to withstand the pull, and had started to split apart.

Splits appeared all over Ke Cang Ju’s face, as though someone had slashed him with a razor blade, a stomach churning sight.

Ke Cang Ju lost his mind then, clutching at his face, feeling horror that he had never felt before!

His flawlessly handsome face cannot be marred!

“NOOOO!!!”

“NOOOOOO!!!”

“What did you give me!?” Ke Cang Ju turned to Jun Wu Xie, as he realised the change had started right after he had swallowed the Bone Rotting Pill from Jun Wu Xie!

Jun Wu Xie stood with her hands crossed before her, as she looked expressionlessly at Ke Cang Ju.

“You called that the Bone Rotting Pill yourself didn’t you? Was that not it?”

Ke Cang Ju was speechless, he had indeed thought that what Jun Wu Xie had fed him was the Bone Rotting Pill as it had looked exactly like it and had also smelled just the same.

But now, he believed he had been undeniably naive.

The elixir had already taken effect within his body and it was definitely nothing like the Bone Rotting Pill.

“What was that!? What exactly did you feed me with!? My face!!! Give me back my face!!!” Ke Cang Ju’s hands were still clutching at his face as he stared at Jun Wu Xie, with blood flowing down his hands, with pieces of thin flesh mixed in.

Jun Wu Xie replied in a soft and unhurried voice:

“Beauty’s Facade.”

“What?” Ke Cang Ju was puzzled. He had never heard of anything named thus.

“The pill I gave you is called the Beauty’s Facade. No matter how ugly a person was, as long as they swallowed the pill, they will gain a beautiful face.” Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes, and her smile grew as radiant as the sun at the break of spring. “But, that beauty lasts only for a short time.”

Very short, just slightly longer than a blink.

Ke Cang Ju looked in disbelief at Jun Wu Xie. He had initially thought the pill Jun Wu Xie showed had been the Bone Rotting Pill, but it had turned out to be something he had not even heard of before..... Beauty's Facade.....

And the Beauty's Facade had forced him to face a fate more agonising than death!

“Give me back my face..... Give it back.....” The pain on his face was growing more and more intense, and Ke Cang Ju started to twitch as he fell to the floor. He could not shield his face any longer and he crept, struggling at every step towards Jun Wu Xie, his hair a tangled mop, his face a bloody mess, looking nothing like the arrogant and malicious Elder within the Cloudy Peaks just a day ago at the recruitment's final assessment.

“Whatever you want, I will give it to you. Just give me back my face..... If you would give it back to me.....” Ke Cang Ju had never been so frightened. The face he had yearned for had just finally become his, but had been destroyed after just a fleeting moment, and made him look even more hideous than before now.

Having had a taste of possessing good looks, he could not stomach the heart rending loss and would never be able to accept this even more hideous countenance now!

Chapter 290: “Beauty’s Facade (2)”

Jun Wu Xie looked down at the grovelling figure at her feet, her half lowered eyes frosty with biting cold. She mercilessly retorted:

“That face was never yours.”

“NO! That is mine! Mine! Please return it back to me! Whatever you want, I will give it to you! I will listen to whatever you say! Please!” Ke Cang Ju pleaded pitifully, his tears mixed into the blood, as the skin on his face split and bled further, and some flesh hung precariously from bits of skin still remaining.

Jun Wu Xie turned just before Ke Cang Ju could almost touch the end of clothes and walked away, heading towards the already teetering Qiao Chu.

“Swallow this.” As Jun Wu Xie held out an elixir within her palm.

Qiao Chu popped it into his mouth without hesitation and swallowed it immediately. The next moment, the burning pains suffered from the Lone Smoke started to fade, and except for his face being still a little pale, he did not feel any other discomfort.

“You sure enjoy hanging around, don’t you?” Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow, as she glanced at the tall slender Hua Yao still hanging upon the wall.

Hua Yao closed his eyes a moment, and breathed out slowly, while he freed himself from his shackles.

The moment he stood upon the ground, Jun Wu Xie threw an elixir to him.

Hua Yao swallowed it without a word, and immediately felt the pain all over his body start to fade. He then proceeded to pull out the metal stakes lodged in his body while he said to Jun Wu Xie: “Thanks!”

After having shaken off the effects of the poison completely, the two youths went to look at Ke Cang Ju.

Ke Cang Ju was lying in a heap on the floor, his body in spasm from the unbearable pain. His eyes were bloodshot red, and looked extremely miserable. When he saw Hua Yao and Qiao Chu completely recovered from the poison's effects after taking Jun Wu Xie's elixirs, his eyes widened in disbelief and he opened his mouth wanting to say something, but at that moment, a wave of agony swept through his body, and the pain made him clench his jaw suddenly, which made him bite through his own tongue!

Blood spurted out from his mouth as his mouth filled and his shock made him gasp, which brought the blood into his lungs!

He clawed at his throat and chest, struggling to breathe and his spasms intensified.

The three youths just watched on calmly, quietly witnessing death come to claim the insidious Ke Cang Ju slowly.

Till the last moment, Ke Cang Ju had regret and despair written in his eyes.....

If Jun Wu Xie had not let him see his own flawless and handsome face before he died, had not granted him his life's greatest desire for that fleeting moment, he would not have understood the sense of loss and not felt such regret. He had finally firmly grasped his most prized good looks after so many long torturous years, only for it to be mercilessly snatched from his clutching fingers and destroyed bit by bit, slowly, right before his very eyes.....

If he had not known heaven, he would not have known the suffering in hell.

The black beast sat silently through it all, and licked at its paws.

[My mistress' wicked sense of humour, hasn't changed at all.....]

[Whatever her enemies treasured most, and prized above everything else, would always be the very thing her mistress

crushed to dust, bit by bit, right before them.]

[It was just too wicked!]

Ke Cang Ju died, and died in regret and despair. He had died bringing with him, his most treasured face a gory mess, which could not even be described as merely ugly.

Qiao Chu stared at Ke Cang Ju's ravaged dead body, and gulped in fright as he stared at Jun Wu Xie.

"Little Xie, this thing you said was called Beauty's Facade..... You made it?" It was just too horrifying!!

Leading people right to the edge of the abyss and giving them no choice but to jump in was definitely much more cruel than a clean slice to the throat!

"I have more here if you are interested to give it a try." Jun Wu Xie asked puzzled, but was willing to share it good naturedly, as she offered it to Qiao Chu.

Qiao Chu turned white as a sheet immediately and shook his head till it almost fell off!

Chapter 291: “Beauty’s Facade (3)”

“I am rather pleased with my face at the moment. Please keep something so precious for people who need it. Please.” Qiao Chu politely declined in a hurry as he pushed Jun Wu Xie’s proffered hand far away from him.

He did not want to touch that “medicine” even with a ten foot pole, especially after witnessing the way Ke Cang Ju had died. It had given him goosebumps like never before and Ke Cang Ju’s face looked absolutely horrifying.

Jun Wu Xie’s Beauty’s Facade had not only Ke Cang Ju, but would haunt Qiao Chu in his nightmares for a long time!

He realised now, men shouldn’t be so obsessed with their looks!

Only then, did Jun Wu Xie finally keep the Beauty’s Facade.

Qiao Chu heaved a heavy sigh in relief, but.....

Did Little Xie just crack a joke and made fun of him? That was a rare sight.

The black beast observed Qiao Chu silently, as Qiao Chu’s thoughts were clearly written all over his face. The black beast really wanted to tell the naive youth that its mistress would never ever crack a joke. If Qiao Chu had dared to nod his head, Jun Wu Xie would have fed him the Beauty’s Facade!

Without a doubt!

“What do we do now?” Qiao Chu cleared his throat in haste, wanting to change the subject in a hurry.

“The Hidden Cloud Peak does not allow any outsiders to come in. Ke Cang Ju seldomly interacts with the disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak, but he shows his face daily. The disciples here had seen him enter the building and if he did not appear for a long period, they will start to suspect something amiss.” Hua Yao

frowned as he thought. He did not feel any loss for Ke Cang Ju's death, but expected trouble to come from here onwards.

He then remembered Jun Wu Xie's words and he turned to look at the tiny figure at the side, somehow feeling Jun Wu Xie had more up his sleeve.

"Ke Cang Ju is not dead." Jun Wu Xie said slowly.

Qiao Chu stared at Jun Wu Xie, speechless as he pointed at the gory corpse on the floor, trying very hard to say something, but he could not find the words.

'This is not dead?'

'This is so dead that it cannot be any more dead!!'

However, Hua Yao's face lit with understanding as he said: "You want me to replace Ke Cang Ju?"

Jun Wu Xie nodded.

Qiao Chu's eyes widened, not believing what he just heard.

"You want Brother Hua to become this hideous monster? Brother Hua can change his bones, but he can't do anything with his skin."

Ke Cang Ju was already rather advanced in age, and his rotten skin would not be what our smooth and fair skinned Hua Yao be capable of replicating."

"I know of a way." Jun Wu Xie replied.

Qiao Chu was silenced. He had thought Jun Xie was only prodigious with his elixirs, and now it seemed that the little kid had a lot more than meets the eye!

With Jun Wu Xie's affirmation, Hua Yao did not see the need to say anything more as he had guessed Jun Wu Xie had thought this through and Jun Wu Xie had just confirmed it for him.

Having been tortured by Ke Cang Ju for more than half a month, Hua Yao had every little detail of Ke Cang Ju's looks burned into

his brain and changing his bone structure to be exactly the same as Ke Cang Ju was a piece of cake to him.

Soon, Hua Yao's body underwent a great change. His tall slender frame changed gradually as his bones shifted and shrank, and his facial bones became less prominent and distinct.

Jun Wu Xie observed silently as Hua Yao went through the transformation, her interest highly piqued. She was skilled in changing her outlook, but nothing close to the complete transformation that Hua Yao was capable of. A person would be able to make use of various medication to make minute changes to their bone structure, but the overall body size and shape could not be changed. Hua Yao was not only able to shift his bones, he could even shrink or enlarge their size.

This phenomenon was way beyond even modern medicine.

The whole transformation process did not take long. Hua Yao transformed into a hunchbacked ugly figure, but his smooth and fair skin did not look any bit like Ke Cang Ju's rough and wrinkled one.

Chapter 292: “Substitution (1)”

The pretty youth’s transformation into a crooked ugly figure was too much for Qiao Chu to take and his eyes flipped from the stark contrast.

“And then, what comes next?” Not bothered by how ugly he had become, Hua Yao turned to look at Jun Wu Xie, waiting for her to complete the transformation.

Jun Wu Xie did not say a word and pulled out a few bottles of medication from the cloth bag slung across her body.

What happened next almost made Qiao Chu’s eyes fall out of his head.

The various weird and unknown medicinal mixtures were applied to Hua Yao’s face. In a blink of an eye, his smooth skin turned rough and wrinkly, the fair shade turned dark and spotted. The skin around the pretty eyes swelled and puffed up before dropping down in sacks turning the eyes into narrow slits. Jun Wu Xie then proceeded to smeared more of medicinal mixture onto Hua Yao’s neck, hands and any other area that would be exposed under a robe and subjected the skin to the transformation.

Moments later, Hua Yao became “Ke Cang Ju”.

“Change into his clothes.” Jun Wu Xie said, pointing to Ke Cang Ju’s corpse lying in a heap on the floor.

Hua Yao showed Qiao Chu an expression of disgust, but he then walked head lowered in resignation, and picked the clothes of a corpse.....

Changed into the dark long robes, Hua Yao stood before Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu, the spitting image of the Elder of the Hidden Cloud Peak, Ke Cang Ju himself! Be it the height, body shape and facial features, he looked every inch just like him. Qiao Chu stared for a long while before he could utter a word.

“Looking at you really gives me the urge to jump over and give you a good thrashing.”

Ke Cang Ju was left looking even more miserable in his underclothes, lying upon the ground, his face frozen in an expression of deep regret and despair.

Jun Wu Xie retrieved a bottle of body dissolving chemical from a shelf at the side and poured it onto Ke Cang Ju's body.

Ke Cang Ju's body rapidly decomposed and dissolved and was finally reduced into a bloody pool, disappearing into nothing.

“Come on, it's time you go look at your Hidden Cloud Peak, Elder Ke.” Jun Wu Xie cast a glance at Hua Yao, her radiant smile faded, and turned into the cold expressionless petite youth once again.

His Hidden Cloud Peak? Hua Yao smiled, marveling at the kid, Jun Xie's ingenuity who had changed the leadership of the Hidden Cloud Peak without anyone of the Qing Yun Clan finding out. He started to believe Jun Xie's words when he had said he wanted to wipe out the Qing Yun Clan. With such intellect and skills, he might just be capable of it.

Two Hidden Cloud Peak guards were standing outside the building and leaning lazily against the wall when the doors suddenly opened and they scrambled to stand at attention.

“Ke Cang Ju” stepped out from behind the doors with his hideous face sinister and the two guards hurriedly greeted him with their heads lowered, and they were shocked when they suddenly noticed two figures following behind the Elder.

Were those two not the very same sacrificial sheep sent within just hours ago? Why are they walking out from the building unscathed?

It was known that every sheep sent within had not ever walked out alive before, and they would only be carted out after their lives had expired and buried under the herb beds.

Things were different today!

The two disciples' puzzled looks displeased "Ke Cang Ju" and he narrowed his eyes, staring coldly at the two offending disciples before he said in a sinister tone: "Stare again and I'll have your eyes gouged."

The two disciples shivered and quickly averted their eyes from the other two figures who followed behind the Elder, and kept their thoughts to themselves.

Ke Cang Ju's moods were extremely unpredictable and killed without discretion. If anyone of them angered him, even as disciples of the Inner House of the Hidden Cloud Peak, they were not spared from his wrath.

Once the two nosy disciples seemed to realise their place, "Ke Cang Ju" shuffled off with a dark face and made Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie follow him. Before he left, he left instructions to the two shivering disciples guarding the building.

"Go deal with the fertiliser in the basement."

Chapter 293: “Substitution (2)”

Hua Yao brought Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie to Ke Cang Ju’s living quarters, and they passed many Hidden Cloud Peak disciples along the way. They all bowed in obeisance without exception, and seemed to have lost any traces of the arrogance and sneering complacency that was seen in their attitudes within the disciples’ quarters earlier. They fawned and adulated deeply and quickly stepped out of Ke Cang Ju’s way. Their eyes had then showed astonishment when they subsequently noticed the two figures, Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu following right behind their “Elder Ke”.

Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu had put on a duet performance of them falling in a dead faint earlier that morning and the Hidden Cloud Peak disciples recognised the two actors involved. They had thought they would never see their faces before them again, but who would have thought, barely two hours later, they now found the two youths still very much alive before their eyes, and even holding on to the tailcoats of Elder Ke!!

In name, Ke Cang Ju was the Master of those disciples, but none of them within the Hidden Cloud Peak dared follow Elder Ke all over the place.

Elder Ke’s unpredictable temperament was well known within the Qing Yun Clan. Except for a short period of time daily where Elder Ke made an appearance when he handed out his instructions for the day, he had absolutely hated to have any disciples being around him at any other time.

Needless to say, having two of them dogging him throughout the mountains.

What did those two brats do to impress Elder Ke so? They should have on their way to become fertiliser for the herbs by now, but they had somehow managed to come out of the underground chamber alive and well?

That had never ever happened before in the Hidden Cloud Peak!

Under the puzzled stares of the disciples, Hua Yao led Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie into Ke Cang Ju's living quarters brazenly.

Ke Cang Ju's quarters was extremely spacious and luxuriously fitted. Within the whole of the Qing Yun Clan, the only place more spacious and luxurious was the quarters of the Sovereign, Yue Qin himself.

Within the courtyard, several grey robed servants were sweeping the floor with their heads lowered. They had not noticed the entrance of Hua Yao and the two disciples, and they only raised their heads when Hua Yao stood right before the servants.

Qiao Chu gasped loudly when the servants raised their heads.

Their faces, were no longer what he would call a face. Except for their eyes and mouths, nothing else could be differentiated from the faces. The faces looked as if they had been burned by fire, the flesh were all scarred and twisted. The lips had been cut, and half their mouths sewn together, leaving only a small gap open. Their ears and noses had also been removed, their heads deliberately smoothed out to become like a featureless ball.

If Ke Cang Ju's face was thought to be hideous, he had made his servants' faces to be downright revolting.

"These people....." Qiao Chu was shocked by these horrifying looking servants.

"They were previously disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak, and they offended Ke Cang Ju. They were then brought here to his living quarters to serve as lowly servants." Hua Yao said, reverting his voice back to his original clear and youthful voice.

"They cannot hear, nor speak. Hence, you do not have to worry that they will divulge anything of us. In their eyes, I am Ke Cang Ju." Hua Yao said bitingly.

Jun Wu Xie looked at the faces of the servants and she could not

find any signs of awareness. Qiao Chu's and Hua Yao's exchange did not seem to have been heard. They only widened their eyes in fright at the sight of Hua Yao, and shivered like mice before a cat, their fear of Ke Cang Ju, painfully obvious.

Chapter 294: “Substitution (3)”

“That despicable Ke Cang Ju, really deserved to die.” Qiao Chu said, suppressing his anger.

The three of them entered the room, and Hua Yao searched the wardrobe for a clean suit of clothes to change into. Ke Cang Ju only had clothes of a dark shade and did not find one that suited his taste.

In Ke Cang Ju’s study, there were many medical books. From the worn and tattered state of the books, their pages had been obviously well flipped. The most worn ones of them were several books on poisons. Jun Wu Xie flipped through them quickly and threw them in a corner.

“So Brother Hua can even change his voice? I had not known about that, this is a first.” Qiao Chu was sitting on a chair at the side, and suddenly remembered that when he had heard Hua Yao speak earlier, his voice had been exactly the same as Ke Cang Ju’s.

Hua Yao did not answer him and turned to Jun Wu Xie: “What do you want to do next?”

Jun Wu Xie’s objective was not in conflict to theirs, but they were still different after all.

“Why don’t you tell me what are your intentions instead?” Jun Wu Xie walked to the side and sat down slowly, feeling their cooperation had been rather smooth so far.

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu exchanged a glance for a moment before Hua Yao finally said: “We need to find a map.”

Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow.

“I had initially suspected the map to be in Ke Cang Ju’s hands, hence, I got myself admitted to the Hidden Cloud Peak as a disciple to find it. But I had just searched the premises here and did not find anything. If I am not wrong, the map should be with Qin Yue

at the moment.” Hua Yao continued to explain.

“I’ll kill them, and you’ll look for the map.”

“.....” Qiao Chu was speechless at Jun Wu Xie’s nonchalant tone when speaking of committing cruel murder and blatant thievery.

Jun Xie was being just too calm about it!

“When do you intend to make your move?” Hua Yao asked.

“Not right now. After all, I am eyeing the whole Qing Yun Clan.” Jun Wu Xie said as she lowered her eyes. She was in no hurry to make her move yet as the Qing Yun Clan was huge after all. Even for her, to wipe them out in its entirety would not be a simple task. It would not be too hard to just kill Qin Yue, or the Elders, what was difficult to achieve was to send the whole Qing Yun Clan into the abyss at the same time.

The Qing Yun Clan’s Inner House had disciples totaling near a thousand, and they are spread all over the Cloudy Peaks with the twelve individual peaks also housing disciples who resided in their summits. If they were to stir the hornet’s’ nest and kill Qin Yue, it would drive the other Elders into action, and Jun Wu Xie might not be able to get out of it in one piece.

Moreover, she still did not intend to spare anyone of them.

People might call her cruel or even vicious, it did not matter.

The disciples of the Qing Yun Clan were not innocent in her eyes.

Qin Yu Yan had been determined to obliterate the whole of the Qi Kingdom just for the Soul Calming Jade, and she had not bothered to concern herself about the innocence of the people and the commoners.

From Jun Wu Xie’s point of view, anyone who harmed her grandfather and uncle would pay the price with their lives. And her vengeance would not only be upon the mastermind, but onto

any persons involved or linked to it!

She wanted the whole Qing Yun Clan to disappear from the face of these lands at the same time, and she needed a little more time to prepare for it.

“Ke Cang Ju and Qin Yue enjoyed an exceptional relationship. With this appearance, I might be able to gather important information.” Hua Yao was extremely pleased with the way things are going for them. If not for Jun Wu Xie, he would not be able to disguise himself as Ke Cang Ju so completely. Killing Ke Cang Ju would have been easy for him, but he would not be able to substitute himself for Ke Cang Ju’s double, and Jun Wu Xie had helped them solved a thorny issue for them.

“If there is anything you need from us, just let us know. As long as it is within our capabilities, we will give it our best shot.” Hua Yao said.

Chapter 295: “Substitution (4)”

Jun Wu Xie nodded slightly and felt it to be refreshing to work with intelligent allies.

“Qin Yue trusts Ke Cang Ju a lot, and gave him great autonomy and authority. Ke Cang Ju loved poisons to the point of obsession, and I think if he were to ask to be allowed to choose suitable candidates to help him from the other peaks, Qin Yue would not reject him.” Jun Wu Xie said softly.

Hua Yao’s eyes brightened, “I am sure now, you meant every word you said when you said you wanted to wipe out the whole of Qing Yun Clan.”

Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow. Qiao Chu stared puzzled at Jun Wu Xie, and then turned to stare blankly at Hua Yao, scratching his head to show..... that he really could not keep up with the conversation!

“Wait wait wait wait!” Qiao Chu said suddenly, “Can you guys be a little more straightforward, and spare a thought for this not so intelligent mind?” Yes, he had to admit, he was not as meticulous in thought as Little Xie or Brother Hua. He had lost himself somewhere in the conversation and the other two had babbled on happily leaving him confused.

“You finally admit you are lacking in the intelligence department?” Hua Yao asked wickedly.

“You think everyone’s like you and Little Xie? Talking in riddles and expecting everyone to understand you.” Qiao Chu retorted.

Hua Yao sighed and started to patiently explain: “Jun Xie’s intention is to create a division among the Qing Yun Clan. Qin Yue favours Ke Cang Ju and allows him to act with impunity within the Qing Yun Clan. We saw that as a fact when Ke Cang Ju could get away with snatching disciples favoured and picked by Mu Chen

right before his very eyes. Although Ke Cang Ju was highly arrogant, he was not stupid. He might have suppressed the Cloud Treading Peak blatantly, but he kept his hands off the other peaks. Because of this, the other Elders chose not to see Ke Cang Ju's vile actions. And what if Ke Cang Ju were to suddenly decide not to be so discreet and abuse the indulgence Qin Yue allowed him onto the other Elders. It would be our guess that the Elders of the other peaks would not take it lying down."

Qiao Chu was suddenly enlightened, "So, what Little Xie meant was that the other Elders would only know too well what Ke Cang Ju needed their disciples for, and if he were to blatantly go seize disciples from the other peaks, and the purpose was for the testing of poisons, it would definitely anger the other Elders. Am I right?" He finally understood what was going on.

Jun Wu Xie nodded and continued for Qiao Chu's benefit: "Having had your own disciples taken away forcefully and showing their own Elders of their peaks being completely unable to protect them would be as good as slapping the faces of the other Elders. No matter how patient and benevolent they might be, none of them would be able to swallow the insult. And if Qin Yue were to insist on taking the side of the Hidden Cloud Peak, the other peaks will feel the injustice and react, and by that time, the Qing Yun Clan would not be as harmonious as before."

Jun Wu Xie lowered her eyes, hiding the chill within her eyes.

Stirring up conflicts between the Elders and Qin Yue was just an appetizer. What she wanted went way beyond just internal conflicts within the Qing Yun Clan.

"How do you know that Qin Yue will allow Ke Cang Ju to do as he likes? He isn't that dumb is he? He should be able to see that Ke Cang Ju's actions would result in great discontent from the Elders of the other peaks." Qiao Chu tried to reason.

"He will." Jun Wu Xie said softly. Other people might not know

of the inner workings within the Qing Yun Clan, but Bai Yun Xian was a direct disciple of Qin Yue's and she knew the finer intricacies and things about Ke Cang Ju that not many people knew about.

“If he does not, Ke Cang Ju would drag his name into the mud.”

“What does that mean?” Qiao Chu asked curiously, and even Hua Yao looked questioningly at Jun Wu Xie.

“The reason Qin Yue was able to become the Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan was all due to Ke Cang Ju's poisons. If Ke Cang Ju had not helped him poison the former Sovereign, the Qing Yun Clan would have fallen into Mu Chen's hands.” Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes as a chill flashed briefly within.

The Sovereign of the most revered clan throughout the lands, killed his own teacher, usurped the position of Sovereign. Such a crime, even for Qin Yue, would be devastating if pinned on him.

Chapter 296: “Substitution (5)”

When Ke Cang Ju had helped Qin Yue seize the leadership of the Qing Yun Clan, he had naturally kept close to himself a hidden hand against Qin Yue to prevent him from burning all bridges after he assumed the leadership as the Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan. With this hold over Qin Yue, Ke Cang Ju forced Qin Yue to accede to his demands and was helpless against Ke Cang Ju’s vicious and malicious deeds within the Hidden Cloud Peak as Ke Cang Ju held knowledge of events that could turn Qin Yue’s reputation beyond redemption.

This secret, was accidentally overheard by Bai Yun Xian when Qin Yue and Ke Cang Ju had once quarrelled. Jun Wu Xie had not intended to use this against them, but Ke Cang Ju had forfeited his own life when he forcibly brought Death into his Hidden Cloud Peak, and he couldn’t blame anyone else.

Since this path was chosen due to unexpected circumstances, Jun Wu Xie would naturally use everything to her fullest advantage.

This secret hidden within the Qing Yun Clan, shocked Hua Yao and Qiao Chu. They both knew that Qin Yue had used underhanded means to ascend to the leadership position in the Qing Yun Clan, but they had not expected him to have employed such an extreme and despicable method by murdering your own Master!

In their worldly view of things, there was nothing more despicable than killing your own Master.

If word of this got out, Qin Yue would not only lose his position as the Sovereign, he would be cursed and spat upon wherever he went throughout the lands.

“With that information in hand, it is little wonder you were so sure Qin Yue would accede to such atrocious demands.” Qiao Chu almost clapped for Jun Wu Xie then, how did that kid know such

shocking secrets that could hold Qin Yue by his throat?

Jun Wu Xie continued to say: “Ke Cang Ju had kept evidence of Qin Yue’s murder of the former Sovereign, and Qin Yue had always wanted to find it, but to no avail. We might not know where and what the evidence is, but that would not stop us from threatening Qin Yue with this information devastating to him.”

It did not matter whether they held the evidence in their hands, even if they still failed to locate it, Qin Yue would be forced to submit to their threats, without knowing that Ke Cang Ju had actually been replaced secretly.

Hua Yao nodded, understanding fully what Jun Wu Xie meant.

“We’ll carry it out just like what you have said, let’s go stir up some chaos within the Qing Yun Clan!”

Within the chaos, opportunities would surface. After Jun Wu Xie had wiped the Qing Yun Clan out, the two of them could then turn the Qing Yun Clan upside down to find the map that they wanted.

Moreover, using Ke Cang Ju’s unique relationship to Qin Yue, digging for information on the location of the map through conversations with Qin Yue would be easier and faster than if they were to run all over the place searching for information on it.

There was no doubt, the petite youth that Qiao Chu brought in, was more than a great help in their plans!

No matter if the elixirs they needed would be successful or not, they both owed the petite little youth more than they could repay!

That was the when the decision to drive the Qing Yun Clan into chaos, within that very study, was agreed upon. Till the day doom swept across the Qing Yun Clan’s Cloudy Peaks, no one knew that the calamity had first sparked off from right within the Qing Yun Clan.

Outside the door, hidden within the dark shadows and hearing every single word exchanged within the room, was Ye Sha,

growing more shocked the more he heard.

This Young Miss' mind was sharp, and beyond everyone. How long had it only been since she came to the Qing Yun Clan? Things had taken an unexpected turn from her initial plans but she had adapted to the changes and come up with a completely new plan within that short period of time. Just by listening outside, Ye Sha knew the Qing Yun Clan was doomed for sure this time!

Having incurred the wrath of the Miss, could only be seen as the Qing Yun Clan seeking their own death, and there was nobody else to blame for it.

Just Ke Cang Ju's insidious deeds within the Hidden Cloud Peak had gone against the very fabric of nature, and would not be tolerated by the Heavens.

His Lord had ordered Ye Sha to protect her from the shadows, but from what he could see, she did not need any protection from others. With her heaven defying skills with poisons and drugs under those tiny hands, and that amazingly meticulous mind that foresaw all, they were more than enough to drive the Qing Yun Clan over the edge.

Chapter 297: “Orange Spirit (1)”

The second day that Jun Wu Xie had come to the Hidden Cloud Peak, she and Qiao Chu donned the uniforms of the Hidden Cloud Peak disciples. To avoid raising unwanted suspicions, the both of them returned to the living quarters for disciples.

When they appeared within the courtyard wearing their new uniforms reserved only for Hidden Cloud disciples, the eyes of the other youths who had been tormented for two whole days nearly popped right out of their heads!

Those two brats had from the first day been lazy and avoiding work. When they were dragging their exhausted bodies to carry water, the two scoundrels had suddenly disappeared. And on the second morning, when they had been forced to bring their completely drained selves to water the herb beds, those two had been even more incorrigible!

They just decided to shut their eyes and fainted!

They had subsequently been sent to Elder Ke, to enjoy the Elder's treatment.

To return the very next day.

Alas!

They had the cheek to come back dressed in uniforms reserved for accepted disciples, cheeks rosy with being in the pink of health!!

“What in tarnation is going on!? Where did you get those clothes!” The youths were all bent over with exhaustion and they stared in rage at the well rested Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu, their eyes almost boring holes into their uniforms!

It's not fair! The hardworking were oppressed! And the lazy were rewarded with style! It was just too much to take!

The youths were overcome with jealousy and envy, and they clenched their jaw in suppressed rage. A few more narrow minded ones ran straight up to the seniors passing by, to tell tales on the injustice they were made to suffer!

“Senior! Those two scoundrels are actually crafty and lazy.....” They poured out their woes and vehemently indicted Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu of their various crimes of laziness and avoiding work completely.

The Hidden Cloud Peak disciples who were stalled by the youths frowned at the incessantly chattering youth and said impatiently: “You shut your mouth now! Elder Ke pitied you guys for your weak bodies, and reduced the workload for you. Your time should be used to build up and strengthen those bodies and not used to prattle your mouth off! Let me tell you, only those who are dressed in this uniform are the real disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak and Jun Xie and Qiao Chu have been accepted and gained the approval of Elder Ke himself, and nobody is to question that! If anyone is to question Elder Ke’s authority in any way, he can very well get out of the Hidden Cloud Peak!”

After saying that, the disciple pushed the complaining youth away, his face infuriated.

Those sacrificial sheep actually had the audacity to fight for favouritism? If Elder Ke had not showered upon them his mercy, and spared them from a big portion of their daily torment, not a single one of them would be able to get out of here alive.

Just yesterday, Ke Cang Ju had summoned his head disciple and informed him that the Hidden Cloud Peak would temporarily have no need to increase the numbers of sacrificial sheeps. He would be caught up with the research of something new for a period of time and would have no time to handle those youths. So he had left instructions for the disciples to reduce the torment for the newly brought in youths.

With Ke Cang Ju's orders, the Hidden Cloud Peak disciples had restrained themselves and stopped amusing themselves with the torment of the sacrificial sheep.

Those idiots did not know that they had just been mercifully spared, and they dared to still kick up such a fuss.

The youth who was just reprimanded by a senior stood speechless, rooted to the spot, as he stared at the diminishing back of the senior, and looked down at his own clothes, feeling the unfairness of the situation, as his heart winced in pain.

“What did those two scoundrels do to gain the favour of Elder Ke!? This whole thing is just impossible to believe!” The other youths at the side heard the whole exchange and felt just as aggrieved at the injustice. In their eyes, Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie were nothing but trash. Besides acting docile and pitiful, what else were they capable of? Trash like this could not possibly be accepted as disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak before them!

Chapter 298: “Orange Spirit (2)”

“On what basis were they selected to be accepted!?” The other youths were indignant and furious and wished they could run to Elder Ke to ask him about it. Those two brats were inferior to them in every way, how could they earn the acknowledgement of the Elder?

The youths’ fury overtook them, but they did not dare to confront Ke Cang Ju, and they decided to take it out on Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie.

But they had witnessed Qiao Chu’s brutality and prowess before, and they finally “cleverly” decided to pick on the skinny and puny Jun Xie.

Jun Wu Xie had just returned to her room and was just about to go through her plans on how the mission was to be carried out when a hurried knocking sounded on her door, interrupting her thoughts.

She got up to open the door. Just when the door was opened a crack, several youths trampled in furiously, their faces menacing.

“Close the door quick!” One of the youths said hurriedly.

Jun Wu Xie, who had been pushed aside, stood frowning at the aggressive group of youths, her eyes cold as they closed the door.

Six to seven youths stood within the suddenly cramped room.

Jun Wu Xie remained standing on one side, her eyes growing chilly at the intrusion.

“Kid, where did you get those clothes?” One of the youths eyed Jun Wu Xie with an evil glint. They knew very well where Jun Wu Xie got those clothes from, but their intention here was to find trouble and they feigned ignorance to use that as an excuse to properly “teach” this snivelling brat some manners.

What made the Elders of two different peaks fight over this brat? And based on what ability was he accepted as a disciple barely two days into it when they had all just entered the Hidden Cloud Peak together!?

Just thinking about it infuriated the other youths to no end!

Jun Wu Xie swept her gaze across the group of youths and kept her silence.

“What!? You still dare to keep that mightier than thou pose of yours up!? You dare steal the clothes of our seniors! That’s a mighty travesty! If you will just take off those clothes and quietly hand them over to us and apologise, we will force ourselves to overlook this and spare you. If not, we will just snatch those clothes off you forcefully and drag you to our seniors and have them hand down the punishment onto you!” The youth saw that Jun Wu Xie still chose to maintain her silence and wrongly thought that their target had been too shocked to react, which further fueled their desire for vengeance.

They just wanted to give vent to their jealousy and hatred and paid absolutely no heed to the consequences.

Jun Xie was merely a newly accepted brat of a disciple, and if they gave him a good enough trashing and threatened him to keep his mouth shut, he would not dare to tell tales on them in front of Elder Ke!

Jun Wu Xie’s eyes had grown further chillingly cold, and her eyes narrowed and the chill in those eyes started freezing.

“You must be asking for it! My brothers! Strip the shameless thief of his clothes! I want to see how trash like him intends to keep up his pretense!”

Several well built youths, confident of their strength, pounced on the skinny Jun Wu Xie at that moment.

Jun Wu Xie’s frosty eyes flared, and the hidden spiritual powers

exploded out of her body!

Her spiritual powers burst out in a brilliant orange flare, and an orange ball coalesced and glowed within her palm. She turned on her heel and avoided the hands of one of the pouncing youths, and she thrust the palm with the orange glowing ball into his jaw, sending him flying! She suddenly crouched and swept her foot, toppling all the attacking youths in one swift move! She exerted her spiritual powers into her palm and the glow suddenly grew! She threw out her hand and the orange spiritual powers sped quick as lightning towards the youths sprawled upon the floor!

A series of pitiful howling erupted echoing within the room!

The orange glow blasted itself onto the bodies of the youths, bringing a wave of agony to wash over them!

They quickly realised the shade of orange within the glow of the spiritual power and they all stared in utter disbelief!

What was this before their eyes!?

That brat actually had an orange leveled spirit!!

Chapter 299: “Orange Spirit (3)”

They were all just youths still in their teens, starting from the tender age of fourteen when their spirits awoke, they had at most trained and developed their spiritual powers for a mere three years. Within that short span, most people were still stuck at the red level while orange was far from their reach and still a distant dream.

The youths who came to Qing Yun Clan, were mainly those whose strengths leaned more towards medicine and had pursued strongly towards that field, their time and efforts were immersed in the study of medicine, forcing them to somewhat neglect their development of their spiritual powers. Hence, many disciples below twenty years of age in the Qing Yun Clan were commonly found still stuck in a sea of red.

But what was it with this brat!?

He looked to be fourteen or fifteen at most, yet he had already attained the orange level!

Spiritual powers awaken at the age of fourteen, and he actually broke through red to attain the orange level within a year!?

The youths were shocked speechless. Even if they disregarded Jun Xie’s dominating and impressive display of his knowledge of the extremely complicated nurturing and development of veins and arteries before Mu Chen, and assumed Jun Xie to have devoted all his time and energies wholly into the training and development of his spiritual powers, it was still impossible for someone to achieve a breakthrough within such a short span of time!

What was he fed with while growing up!?

He had shown himself to possess exemplary medical knowledge, and now it is proven his spiritual powers development had far surpassed any of them. What’s really going on here!?

The disparity between their spiritual powers were more than sufficient to make those youths who were a couple of years older than Jun Wu Xie knee before her in surrender. It might be a difference of just one level, but the level red was just the opening the door to see the expanse of spiritual powers for the first time, and level orange was already a step into the door opening a whole new realm of spiritual development and prowess. The distance between the two cannot be explained with words alone, but only fully understood by those who have crossed the threshold.

This was the first time Jun Wu Xie had used her spiritual powers in an attack, and the exquisite feeling of strength and power raging in her body, but fused naturally within, was an inexplicable feeling.

She cast her cold gaze on the pale faced youths on the floor and they started shivering uncontrollably when those chilling eyes fell on them.

In just a brief moment, the youths had lost all of their lofty and confident aggression. They had initially thought the kid named Qiao Chu would not be easy to handle, but never had they expected the tiny and petite one would turn out to be one not to be trifled with!

They shouldn't be blamed for being blind to that fact, as it was true that, anyway you looked at Jun Xie, he did not seem to be one that would possess such strong spiritual powers, not in the least bit.

But the truth could be so cruel, the might of an orange level spirit, overpowered them completely, bashed their faces in, making their faces swell and looking like a bunch of pigs.

“Are all of you waiting for death to claim you?” Jun Wu Xie asked with her eyes narrowed when she saw the youths all still frozen with shock within her room and her frown deepened.

The youths then snapped awake and scrambled for their lives out

of the door as if a horrifying ghost were after them.

Qiao Chu was about to knock on the door when he saw in puzzlement a group of startled youths shot out from Jun Wu Xie's room in flight. He stood stunned, rooted to the spot, a look of incomprehension on his face.

"What did they want from you?" Qiao Chu stuck his head through the doorway and asked Jun Wu Xie. He noted that Jun Xie's clothes were not ruffled and his expression was as usual before deciding that he had not been bullied. But those youths had fled like startled pigeons and ran like the wind, and he had been worried.

"Death." Jun Wu Xie replied curtly, dispersing the orange glow in her palm.

Qiao Chu's sharp eyes caught a glimpse of an orange glow dispersing from Jun Wu Xie's palm and he blinked his eyes, unsure of what he just saw.

Little Xie was just a little over fourteen right? His spirit awoke barely half a year ago, and he couldn't have broken through to attain the orange level so soon could he?

He must have been mistaken!

Qiao Chu was just about to put his foot in through the door when Jun Wu Xie suddenly slammed the door shut. Qiao Chu suddenly found his nose turning red and tears streaming down his face.

"I want to rest." Jun Wu Xie's marching orders sounded from behind the door and Qiao Chu was left rubbing his glaringly red bruised nose as he trudged back silently to his own room.

Little Xie's personality was just too disagreeable!

Chapter 300: “Silver Lining (1)”

It was early the next morning when Jun Wu Xie stepped out from her room and went towards the herb beds within the Hidden Cloud Peak.

Ke Cang Ju had been obsessed with the development of poisons and had planted herb beds everywhere within the Hidden Cloud Peak filling the place with an abundance of herbs.

As she had been unable to use Jade Nectar to cultivate the Snow Lotus to absorb its spiritual powers, Jun Wu Xie wanted to look for an alternative and had come to the herb beds to see if she could absorb the miniscule trickle of spiritual powers from their growth.

After her first time using her spiritual powers in an attack, Jun Wu Xie became acutely aware of the might of the unique strength this world provided. Although she had her overwhelming medical skills, she did not think that compensated for anything for her.

With Hua Yao's newly laid down instructions in the Hidden Cloud Peak, the youths regained some semblance of a normal life. At least they did not have to go hungry, or be overworked. Their daily tasks consisted mainly of tending to the various plant life within the Hidden Cloud Peak.

Although it was still early in the day, tens of them were carrying water and running about the herb beds watering them.

It was queer to note though, that just the day before, they could not even stand the sight of Qiao Chu and Jun Wu Xie and had wanted to tear them apart. But on this bright and early morning the very next day, they went out of their way to avoid them, scuttling away like frightened mice, running far away from both of them. Hence, in the area that Jun Wu Xie was standing, there was no one tending to the poor herbs and only Qiao Chu could be seen, carrying buckets, and sprinkling the water with scoops over the thirsty plants.

“Little Xie, why don’t we go see Brother Hua instead of staring at the plants and flowers?” His buckets empty, Qiao Chu was getting bored as he leaned against a tree as he sat. He stuck a blade of long grass into his mouth and put his hands behind his head as he observed Jun Wu Xie tending to the herbs.

For someone who was prodigious in his skills in the cultivation of elixirs, the concoction of poisons, and was devilishly cunning in his schemes, to be seen squatting down and enjoying his labour with the common herb beds, was a scene that Qiao Chu could not make himself come to understand at all.

Jun Wu Xie ignored Qiao Chu’s lamenting and directed her focus onto the herb bed before her. The herbs planted here were very rare and precious and Jun Wu Xie had only previously seen them in books. When she was in Lin Palace, she had not been able to produce many types of medicine and elixirs, and it had been for no other reason than the fact that she just did not have enough herbs.

The Qi Kingdom had a limited supply of herbs and there were some precious herbs that even Mo Qian Yuan could not get. Jun Wu Xie had already dug out all the herbs from the Imperial Store but she had still faced a major shortage.

She did not expect to find within the Hidden Cloud Peak many kinds of rare herbs she had eyed for a long time. With them, Jun Wu Xie would be able to cultivate and produce many more types of elixirs and medicine that she had wanted to make.

She found out as well that the more precious the herb was, the more spiritual energy she could absorb from the plant during the cultivation process. It might not be anywhere close to what the Snow Lotus was able to provide, it was still better than nothing.

This new finding greatly motivated Jun Wu Xie, as her training and development of her spiritual powers was no different from being a gardener, it did not matter to her what she planted.

Jun Wu Xie stayed among the herb beds throughout the day, and

Qiao Chu left, unable to take the boredom, running to find Brother Hua for some attention.

Night fell, and Jun Wu Xie still had not left the herb beds. The Hidden Cloud Peak lit torches every night around the perimeters, to allow the disciples to be able to care for the rare and precious herbs even at night.

Under the moonlight, Jun Wu Xie was still squatted by the herb beds, observing a clump of Ice Grass. Suddenly, a warmth spread within her sleeve and she reached with her other hand to touch it and a jade green bead appeared within her palm.

The Embellished Wooden Bead, the compensation to Little Lotus from Jun Wu Yao. When Little Lotus had manifested into a Snow Lotus during his cultivation, this bead had been with him, but when he returned into Jun Wu Xie's body, he had not been able to bring the bead along with him, so he had given it to Jun Wu Xie for safekeeping.

Chapter 301: “Silver Lining (2)”

Jun Wu Xie had not given the Embellished Wooden Bead much thought as it was an item meant for a ring spirit's use, and she did not have use for it.

But on this night, the bead had reacted queerly. The bead which had been usually cold started to radiate out waves of warmth. Jun Wu Xie put the bead within her palm and under the light from the torches and the moon, she could actually see faint and light trails of mist emitting from the Embellished Wooden Bead. The mist was very faint and you had to stare very hard before you could even see it. The faint mist spread over the herb bed before Jun Wu Xie and covered the herbs bit by bit.

Suddenly, Jun Wu Xie's eyes brightened as she felt a significant increase in the spiritual energy that flowed into her body.

If she were to describe the spiritual energy that was absorbed when she cultivated the Snow Lotus as a lake, then the energy that common herbs provided would be just a ladle, and slightly more precious herbs would provide her with a bucketful. But now, the trickle of spiritual energy she was absorbing had suddenly swelled into a windy stream.

It might not be comparable to a lake, but a stream was much better than a ladle or a bucket by many times over!

This discovery puzzled Jun Wu Xie and she summoned Little Lotus immediately.

The hastily summoned Little Lotus was still drowsy from being awakened and his soft chubby face showed bewilderment. He rubbed his eyes and gave out a great big yawn as his tiny feet stood unsteadily in the soil.

“Mistress, you needed me for something?” The sleepy Little Lotus scratched his head, looking like he would fall asleep on his

feet anytime.

“What is happening to the Embellished Wooden Bead?” Jun Wu Xie pushed the bead before Little Lotus. Upon seeing the Embellished Wooden Bead, Little Lotus perked up and all thoughts of sleep left him. He stared at it in yearning and picked it up precariously, smiling widely as he rubbed the bead over his tummy.

“I had not seen you for such a long time, I missed you so much.” Little Lotus grinned toothily as he brought the Embellished Wooden Bead to his eye.

Jun Wu Xie’s brow twitched and she reached out and grabbed Little Lotus who had been totally distracted by the Embellished Wooden Bead, and stared into his eyes.

“Be serious!”

Little Lotus quivered and stood blinking his eyes at Jun Wu Xie, not understanding what he did wrong.

Jun Wu Xie calmed herself and patiently explained the earlier queer reactions of the Embellished Wooden Bead. Little Lotus listened and nodded, trying to appear wise and said: “That is very normal, the Embellished Wooden Bead was meant for a plant based ring spirit’s use, and plant based ring spirits were manifestations from plants. It is a given that when it reacts to plant based ring spirits, it would also react to common plants and flowers. But, common plants and flowers do not possess enough spiritual strength and do not possess consciousness, and hence, they are unable to make use of the powers of the Embellished Wooden Bead for cultivation, but it will still help them to grow faster.”

Little Lotus took a deliberate meaningful pause and held the Embellished Wooden Bead as high as his stubby frame could reach and said: “In the day, the Embellished Wooden Bead will absorb the energies from the earth and the skies, and when night came, if the spiritual energy absorbed is not cultivated, it will be dispersed,

and the spiritual energies let out by the Embellished Wooden Bead is the most nourishing thing you can give to the plants.”

Having said that, Little Lotus crinkled his nose.

What a huge waste, so much spiritual energy here and they were all “fed” to these common plants, it was a travesty to squander god’s gift like this.

Unknown to Little Lotus, his lengthy explanation had greatly impacted Jun Wu Xie. If the Embellished Wooden Bead really worked as Little Lotus said, it would then not only be useful to plant based ring spirits, but she could also borrow the unique powers of the Embellished Wooden Bead and make use of the herbs within the Hidden Cloud Peak to develop her own spiritual powers!

Chapter 302: “Silver Lining (3)”

It was at a slower pace than when she had absorbed in the Lin Palace, but under the current restricted circumstances, the spiritual energy that was made available after the Embellished Wooden Bead’s amplification had Jun Wu Xie pleasantly surprised.

With the Embellished Wooden Bead, her development of her spiritual powers would not be slowed much within the period spent in the Qing Yun Clan anymore!

Picking up the Embellished Wooden Bead from Little Lotus’ tiny hands, Jun Wu Xie felt that the bead was still emitting a slight warmth, and suddenly, a charmingly demonic face appeared in her mind.

At that moment, Jun Wu Xie froze.

“Jun Wu Yao.....” The words came out of Jun Wu Xie’s mouth in a barely audible whisper as she hung her head and a frown formed on her face.

Why had she suddenly thought of Jun Wu Yao?

Jun Wu Xie did not understand why, and the face quickly faded away. She brushed it off and continued to absorb the spiritual energies with the Embellished Wooden Bead.

Hidden within the shadows, secretly protecting Jun Wu Xie, stood Ye Sha. He was stunned by Jun Wu Xie’s barely whispered three words, it had been very soft, but he was certain of what he heard.

Wasn’t that His Lord’s “assumed” name!?

At that moment, Ye Sha’s hand flickered and a black snake the size of his finger dropped to the ground from his sleeve. He retrieved paper from his clothes and scribbled something and sealed it with paraffin wax before letting the snake swallow it.

He saw the snake slide off into the grass and it soon disappeared, and Ye Sha suddenly let out a long sigh.

My Lord! That's the most I can help you out with!

After that night, Jun Wu Xie was seldom seen around the herb beds in the day, but in the night, after everyone else had retired for the day, Jun Wu Xie would be seen walking towards the herb beds.

Towards Jun Wu Xie's queer antics, the youths who had been admitted at the same time with her would only gossip in whispered tones discreetly, and did not dare to openly go against Jun Wu Xie anymore.

Qiao Chu had followed Jun Wu Xie a couple of times, but he saw that she only only snipped and trimmed at the herbs and found it extremely boring and stopped doing that. He used that time to disturb Hua Yao instead.

After transforming into Ke Cang Ju, Hua Yao daily task was to put up an arrogant and cold front, and ride roughshod over the disciples, leading a leisurely life. Night or day, Qiao Chu would climb in noiselessly through the window and appear in Hua Yao's room suddenly. This night, Hua Yao had just changed his clothes to prepare to go to bed when he saw the scoundrel climb in through the window again, and his face grew sinister.

"Whoa! Brother Hua, don't give me that look, it hurts." Qiao Chu shielded his eyes and cringed back from Hua Yao's eyes.

The wooden comb in Hua Yao's hand crumbled into dust.

"What are you doing here again!?" Hua Yao longed to strangle the idiot to death. Qiao Chu brought him nothing but rage, can't he find someone else to irritate?

Qiao Chu sat down at the table ostentatiously, and poured himself a cup of water to drink. "I am here just to see the situation. The plans that you two had made earlier had sounded good, but why isn't anything happening for so many days? Little Xie just

stays inside the pharmacy or runs to the herb beds and stare, and you laze and live a life of leisure all day. When are we going to act? I'm going to be bored to death!"

Qiao Chu did not understand it. Everyone had been so excited when they had made their plans days ago, but after that, the other two of them had not said a thing further.

Didn't they say there were going to instigate a conflict between the Elders and Qin Yue and wipe out the Qing Yun Clan in the process? But why were they not moving?

Hua Yao took a deep breath. He realised he had to explain it clearly to this dolt here or he would be bugged to death.

"Qin Yue is coming to the Hidden Cloud Peak tomorrow." Hua Yao said.

Chapter 303: “Soul Exchange (1)”

Qiao Chu’s eyes lit up at the news. Was it finally going to begin?

“Go back and let Jun Xie know. See if he needs us to prepare anything.” Jun Wu Xie was the brains behind the plot and Hua Yao felt that Jun Xie needed to know about it.

“Both of had just been waiting all this while?” Qiao Chu finally understood the reason for the period of inaction. Hua Yao had just assumed the form of Ke Cang Ju, and although he knew who Ke Cang Ju was, he had needed more time to fully copy his personality and mannerisms. Moreover, Ke Cang Ju had been rather conniving and had almost never gone to Qin Yue of his own volition, and if they had gone straight up to Qin Yue and made their request, Qin Yue might become suspicious, so they had laid back and waited for Qin Yue to come to them.

Hua Yao nodded in agreement.

Qiao Chu became excited. “Sure! I’ll go tell Little Xie now.”

Qiao Chu immediately got up and slipped out through the window, running to tell Jun Wu Xie the news.

The corner of Hua Yao’s mouth twitched as he stared at the open window, thinking vehemently that he would get people to seal it up the very next day!

Qiao Chu flew straightaway to find Jun Xie and as he had expected, the kid was busying himself among the herb beds. He rushed up to Jun Xie and exclaimed excitedly: “Qin Yue will be coming to see Hua..... Ke Cang Ju, and Brother Hua asked me if you needed us to prepare anything.”

Jun Wu Xie stood up, her eyes clear in understanding.

“Bring it to Hua Yao tomorrow, and have Hua Yao make sure it is present at the meeting during their discussions.” Jun Wu Xie suddenly produced a little black cat out of nowhere and the cat

stared intently at Qiao Chu with its round eyes.

Qiao Chu was stunned, and he found the little black cat vaguely familiar.

“Is that your ring spirit?” He finally remembered! When they were thrown into the building with the underground chamber, the cat had hidden itself at the back of the shelf, but he had not seen the cat thereafter.

“Not exactly, Qin Yue will not sense anything amiss from it.” Little black cat was never a ring spirit, and it had never possessed any spiritual powers like a ring spirit. Qin Yue will not sense anything different and will only see it as just an ordinary black cat.

Qiao Chu nodded and reached out his cat to stroke the black cat as he asked Jun Wu Xie: “Is your ring spirit that black beast that appeared previously?” He had not forgotten the majestic black beast that had appeared in the underground chamber.

“Hiss!” The little black cat extended its claws threateningly at Qiao Chu’s stretched out hand, and he hastily retracted it. Qiao Chu then stared, his feelings hurt, at the proud furball.

He suddenly paused, when he noticed a lightning shaped crest of gold fur upon the cat’s chest. He remembered seeing the same thing on the black beast previously. And it had been the same shape and was in the same position.

“This.....” Qiao Chu could not believe what he was thinking as he pointed a finger at the little black cat, shock in his eyes.

“Yes.” Jun Wu Xie could guess at what Qiao Chu was thinking and confirmed it for him readily.

“.....” Qiao Chu just stood there with his mouth open, unable to find words to express his shock. The little black cat did not give out vibes of a ring spirit and Qiao Chu had concluded it was not. But..... a black cat that could transform into a black beast was still no ordinary cat!

He did not know why Jun Xie wanted him to send the little black cat to Hua Yao but he would just do as Jun Xie had asked. He had come to learn that the silent kid who did not speak much did things that normal people could not hope to comprehend, and he guessed that even Brother Hua would not understand the reason for Jun Xie's decision this time.

Bring a cat.....

For what purpose?

"One more thing." Jun Wu Xie said, as if suddenly remembering.

"What?" Qiao Chu looked at Jun Xie, waiting to hear something more mind boggling.

"Stand guard outside my room tomorrow, and do not allow anyone to go in. Yourself included." Having said her piece, Jun Wu Xie turned, and walked off carrying the black cat in her arms.

Chapter 304: “Soul Exchange (2)”

Qiao Chu was speechless as he stared at Jun Wu Xie’s disappearing back, his hand left hanging in the air with Jun Wu Xie’s sudden departure.

He was not objecting to being barred from entering Jun Xie’s room, but he should at least left the cat behind! He wouldn’t be able to bring the cat to Brother Hua if he was not allowed to enter Jun Xie’s room!

At least make that clear before leaving!

At the break of dawn the next morning, the still sleeping Qiao Chu was rudely shocked awake by a ear piercing scratching sound at his door. Opening the door furiously, Qiao Chu only found the little black cat sitting innocently before him.

“Did your master get you to come?” Qiao Chu looked into the sky, and the eastern sky was just lightening. The doors of all the other disciples were all still shut tight, probably still sleeping soundly in their dreams.

The little black cat narrowed its eyes, its disagreeable disposition against him last night seemed to have disappeared, but was replaced by a chilling cold.

Qiao Chu turned to the black cat and bent to scoop it up into his arms. He saw the cold and calm eyes of the little black cat as he lowered his body, and he suddenly had a vision. Standing before him was not a little black cat, but Jun Xie himself.

Those eyes! They had the exact same look!

Staring into those eyes, Qiao Chu suddenly lacked the courage to carry it. It somehow made him feel he would be carrying Jun Xie.

The little black cat did not extend its claws this time, but sauntered gracefully to come beside Qiao Chu, and with a great leap, it landed nimbly on Qiao Chu’s shoulders and its sleek feline

form settled comfortably on his shoulders.

The little black cat remained silent, its paws dug lightly into Qiao Chu's clothes and sat with its chin raised, eyes still clearly cold.

“What a sight! Why do I feel that you and your master were created out of the same mould?” Those eyes, and personality, were just a replica of its master!

The black cat had reacted differently last night though.

He did not have the time to clear his doubts. Qiao Chu made use of the still dark skies before dawn, and sped towards Hua Yao's quarters.

Hua Yao was still dreaming deeply when a loud crash woke him suddenly. He sat up immediately staring viciously at the scoundrel who broke through the sealed window!

“Brother Hua! Morning!” Qiao Chu exclaimed as he patted himself free of the morning dew on his clothes after bringing the little black cat over. Those clothes were rather presentable and he greatly treasured them.

Hua Yao rubbed his temples, feeling a headache coming on. He suppressed the urge within him with everything he had, to strangle the twit before him to death.

Couldn't he act like normal people? People who knock!

Hua Yao swallowed his rage, his eyes drawn to the sleek black form.

When Qiao Chu had broken in through the window, the little black cat had jumped off his shoulders and landed nimbly on the table at the side. It was now directly facing Hua Yao who was still sitting on the bed.

“This is.....?” Hua Yao frowned at the extraordinarily calm black cat.

Qiao Chu plopped down on a chair and said smiling: “Little Xie

told me to bring it. He said to bring the cat along for the meeting with Qin Yue. Brother Hua, what do you think is the significance of bringing the cat along?”

Even Hua Yao was baffled this time, with his quick and intelligent mind, he was stumped, unable to think of a good reason for Jun Xie’s intention to bring the little black cat for the meeting.

No other preparations, but only to bring the cat?

As Hua Yao was racking his brains out to think of a reason, the cat who sat observing them coldly, suddenly opened its mouth to speak.

“When is Qin Yue coming?”

The cold, clear voice was extremely familiar to them, and looking like they had been suddenly struck by lightning, their souls almost flew out of their bodies in shock!

Chapter 305: “Soul Exchange (3)”

That cat could talk!!

And with Jun Xie’s exact same voice!

Qiao Chu almost fell off his chair, his mouth wide open.

Hua Yao was not doing any better, he had transformed into Ke Cang Ju and his expression looked absolutely horrendous.

“Little Xie?” Qiao Chu’s shocked face froze for a long while before he found his voice back and he asked hesitantly.

“Hmm.” The little black cat replied affirmatively.

Qiao Chu still felt himself screaming inside!

“Brother Hua, hit me once, see if I’m dreaming.” Qiao Chu was losing his mind.

Hua Yao accepted the invitation with glee and slapped him mightily across the face!

That big slap could almost be heard in the next peak!

“Did that hurt?” Hua Yao asked slyly, feeling better having taken his revenge.

Qiao Chu clasped his hand to his red hot burning cheek and almost cried while he said: “That really hurt.....”

The black cat..... No, more specifically, Jun Wu Xie who had taken over the little black cat’s body, was silently observing the antics of Qiao Chu and Hua Yao, its eyes calm, without a ripple of emotion showing.

No one knew she could exchange her soul with Little Black. After their had merged, she realised that the two of them could swop souls, but with certain risks involved. The little black cat’s soul was not able to sustain Jun Wu Xie’s body and when Jun Wu Xie was in the little black cat’s body, her own body would be at great

risk. For if anyone who was to cause harm to her body during that period, she would be defenceless. Moreover, during the soul exchange, Jun Wu Xie would not be able to transform the little black cat's body into the black beast.

It must be said, carrying out the exchange, brought about great risks to both the little black cat and her.

The soul exchange can be carried out only when both bodies and whole and complete. When she was just reborn, Jun Wu Xie's body was badly ravaged, and she was not able to carry out the soul exchange. Little black cat's soul would be unable to sustain a human body and its soul would have died together with the body, and Jun Wu Xie would have been imprisoned her whole life within the little black cat's body, and be unable to transform.

This time, Jun Wu Xie had decided on this course of action based on the trust she had for Qiao Chu. They might not have collaborated for a long time, but based on their interaction within this period, she knew, the two of them could be trusted within this period of their alliance. Nevertheless, she did not intend to tell them about the dangers and risks involved in the soul exchange, to prevent them from getting any ideas. Moreover, harming her would do them not a bit of good here.

Every action that Jun Wu Xie took, had been carefully and meticulously thought through and repeatedly deliberated. Only after she was certain, would she make her move.

And her placid calm now, just left Qiao Chu and Hua Yao all the more speechless.

Even though the little black cat was not a ring spirit, and was closely entwined with a human soul, nobody else was able to carry out a soul exchange.

Jun Wu Xie's action had completely changed Qiao Chu's and Hua Yao's perception of how things worked in the world.

After a long uncomfortable silence, Hua Yao finally recovered and he stared at the little black cat, trying very hard to speak to it like he was speaking to Jun Xie.

“You want to listen in on what Qin Yue has to say?” Hua Yao asked.

The black cat nodded, looking exceptionally graceful.

“I need to judge Qin Yue’s level of tolerance to Ke Cang Ju.” Since the circumstances had changed, she wanted to use Ke Cang Ju’s identity to its fullest extent.

“I understand.” Hua Yao understood. Ke Cang Ju’s meeting with Qin Yue would not allow a third person to be present. But if it was only a little black cat, no matter how careful Qin Yue was, he wouldn’t suspect anything as no one else had ever heard of a human being able to swap souls with an animal before.

Chapter 306: “Obliterate (1)”

When the sky lightened, Qiao Chu left and stood guard outside Jun Wu Xie’s door.

Hua Yao and Jun Wu Xie waited within the Hidden Cloud Peak for the arrival of the Sovereign, Qin Yue.

When Qin Yue appeared at the Hidden Cloud Peak, the new recruits were overawed. They tagged behind the Sovereign with adoration in their eyes.

The man behind the Qing Yun Clan’s might, the man fabled to be the most highly skilled in medicine throughout the lands!

Over the generations of Sovereigns of the Qing Yun Clan, they had all possessed extraordinary skills in medicine. In the early days, the founder of the Qing Yun Clan was the widely famed miracle healer and after he set up the Qing Yun Clan, and over the generations, the people of the lands had come to tag the name of the world’s top healer to the serving Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan.

Almost daily, people showed up uninvited, hoping for Qin Yue to help them alleviate their pains and ailments. Besides the high demand for treatment and healing, many others swarmed to him for elixirs.

Healing and cultivation of elixirs were never far apart and skilled healers would always have unique recipes for an elixir or two.

At the Qing Yun Clan, it was believed that Qin Yue’s healing skills could bring a man on the brink of death back to life and relieve all his wounds. His elixirs were in great demand as people were bound to fall prey to illnesses and ailments and the sick infirmed, or even severely wounded might not be able to survive the long arduous journey to the Qing Yun Clan.

Moreover, Qin Yue only extended his healing skills to just one

patient a month and that privilege was highly sought after. Unless they had in hand something the Qing Yun Clan sought, that opportunity was usually beyond the reach of most people.

In a plea to convince Qin Yue to lend his medicinal expertise, many expert exponents volunteered to stay within the Qing Yun Clan to serve as resident mercenaries, and countless rich families have parted with vast riches for that sense of security the elixirs gave.

In the eyes of the people, the Qing Yun Clan Sovereign held more than just his expertise in medicine.

Not just the Qing Yun Clan's Sovereign's healing expertise was highly sought, people fought to impress him just to be accepted as a disciple of the Qing Yun Clan.

The youths were eager to leave a lasting impression on Qin Yue and would have leached on but the thought of Ke Cang Ju's sinister face loomed within their minds and they gave up after some time.

Qin Yue's benign face smiled gently as he walked within the Hidden Cloud Peak and his exalted but harmonious presence put a distance between himself and the respectful disciples and many of them swore to strive to emulate some of Qin Yue's dominating air.

Under a crowd of adoring eyes, Qin Yue came to Ke Cang Ju's quarters and entered. The smile on his face disappeared immediately and that benign face clouded, his brow creased into a frown, his foul mood and displeasure obvious.

His face darkened, Qin Yue strode quickly forward, seemingly familiar with the way around. He stood in the study in moments, finding Ke Cang Ju flipping through his ancient texts.

With a bang, Qin Yue slammed the door shut.

Hua Yao looked up from behind his desk, his hideous face splitting into a sinister smile. A little black cat laid lazily upon the desk, its eyes closed, looking like it was fast asleep.

“Our Sovereign seems to be in a rather foul mood today?” Hua Yao said, imitating Ke Cang Ju’s sarcastic tone.

“I want you to concoct a poison for me, one that makes people suffer a fate worse than death, and inflicts unimaginable horrific agony!” Qin Yue’s face was distorted with undisguised hatred and his words dripped with venom.

Chapter 307: “Obliterate (2)”

“Oh? For who?” Hua Yao asked lightly.

Qin Yue took a deep breath, suppressing the rage that welled up in his chest.

“Yu Yan and Elder Jiang are dead.”

Hua Yao froze a moment. The Qin Yu Yan that Qin Yue was talking about was his only daughter. He had pampered and spoilt rotten this daughter of his and did everything within his power to give her everything she had ever wanted. As the Eldest Miss of the Qing Yun Clan, Qin Yu Yan was the sweetheart of the clan, and was loved by everyone, and her benign and pretty looks was an almost exact replica of Qin Yue.

Hua Yao had had a prior encounter with Qin Yu Yan when he had first snuck into the Hidden Cloud Peak in search of the map, he had been hiding in the shadows when he saw Qin Yu Yan and Ke Cang Ju in the underground chamber tormenting the innocent youths, her beautiful face was an insidious mask, working in cahoots with Ke Cang Ju. She displayed a stark contrast to Ke Cang Ju, her false facade of benign kindness and gentleness on her face, like Qin Yue, but was party to dastardly deeds in secret, together with the hideous and sinister looking Ke Cang Ju.

But, as the very treasured apple of Qin Yue’s eye, how was she killed so suddenly?

The little black cat on the table flicked its ears and opened its eyes slowly, and a flicker of hatred flashed as it swept its cold gaze across the room and those eyes passed Qin Yue.

Qin Yue had received news of Qin Yu Yan’s death earlier than she had expected.

“The audacious tiny Kingdom of Qi dared to commit such a travesty against us! That useless no good Jun Family actually dared

kill my daughter! I want the whole family to die and cut into a thousand pieces! Ke Cang Ju, give me the best poison of your life's work! I want the Jun Family and the Qi Imperial Family to be buried together with my daughter!" Qin Yue's jaw was tightly clenched as his rage threatened to overcome him. He was no longer young and already middle aged and he had only Qin Yu Yan, his most treasured one and only daughter. His most beloved daughter had been brutally murdered in the faraway Kingdom of Qi, and the humiliation and anger drove a strong urge within him to lead a force to storm the Qi Kingdom and shred his enemies to pieces.

Hua Yao was shocked after hearing Qin Yue's rant and a incredulous notion crept into his mind. He innocuously glanced at the black cat, as his suspicion grew stronger.

Jun Family..... Didn't Jun Xie shares that same name?

And, did Qiao Chu not first meet Jun Xie in the very same Imperial City of Qi?

Hua Yao had been curious about what had caused Jun Xie to harbour such deep hatred for the Qing Yun Clan, to want to obliterate the whole lot of them. Now, it seemed that if his suspicions were right, Jun Xie was closely linked to the Jun Family that killed Qin Yu Yan, and Jun Xie's intention to wipe out the Qing Yun Clan was to strike first at the enemy while they were unprepared.

In that scenario, if the Qing Yun Clan remained, the Jun Family would be the one annihilated!

As working partners, no matter if Jun Xie was linked to the Jun Family in question, Hua Yao decided to probe further on Jun Xie's behalf. "You don't need me to do that, wouldn't just a few of the highly skilled resident mercenaries of the Qing Yun Clan would be more than enough to squash them completely?"

A frosty laugh escaped from Qin Yue's throat: "A straight death would be too easy on them, I want them to suffer a fate worse than

death! I will bring them back to the Qing Yun Clan, and feel every bit of the agonising torment I would inflict on them, and have them beg to be killed! Nothing less than that would appease the anger and hatred in my heart!”

Those that killed my daughter must not be allowed to walk the earth! If her murderers were not put through insufferable torment, his daughter’s soul would not find peace!

Hua Yao nodded in supposed agreement.

Jun Wu Xie’s soul within the little black cat narrowed its eyes after hearing Qin Yue’s words. She appreciated Hua Yao gesture of thoughtfulness after finding out Qin Yue did not intend to send a force to the Qi Kingdom.

But even if he did, Jun Wu Xie was undeterred.

The fact that she dared to leave the Qi Kingdom meant that she had absolute confidence. Before she obliterated the Qing Yun Clan, no matter who Qin Yue sent, they would not be able to lay a finger on the Jun Family.

Chapter 308: “Obliterate (3)”

“It’s just killing a few people, I can agree to that. But in exchange, I need you to agree to one condition I have.” Hua Yao asked, his eyes intently watching Qin Yue.

“What is it?” Qin Yue asked frowning. His mind was dead set on vengeance for Qin Yu Yan and he would agree to any conditions that Ke Cang Ju wanted.

Hua Yao grew a little more confident and he smiled: “I might have called it a condition, but it’s actually a necessity for me to carry out your daughter’s vengeance. In my opinion, there aren’t many people capable of killing Jiang Chen Qing, and if my memory serves me correctly, several highly skilled exponents had also accompanied Jiang Chen Qing’s and the Eldest Miss’ delegation and they were all killed. That makes me suspect that the Qi Kingdom has experts with them. I am sure you are aware that the effects of poisons are weakened when used on skilled people, and the more highly skilled they are, the weaker the effects will be. If you want revenge for your daughter’s death, you will have to help me with it.”

Qin Yue stared at Hua Yao and said impatiently: “What do you need from me? Just tell me straight!”

Hua Yao laughed lightly and said: “It is very simple in fact. New recruits are too weak and I have lost interest in using them as experimental specimens for my research. I am not able to yield enough results from them. The disciples within the twelve peaks are skilled and they have always nurtured and developed their bodies. Their spiritual powers might not be parallel to expert exponents but the condition of their bodies are much better than many others. If I can use them to experiment my poisons, the results will give a more accurate reflection of its effects and inflict more agonising torment on the people who murdered your daughter, wouldn’t you agree?”

Hua Yao's words made Qin Yue hesitate for a long while as he turned to face that hideous countenance, as the words sunk in.

"You want to use the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan to test your poisons?" Qin Yue's voice had turned cold.

Hua Yao pushed on, "Why not? The Qing Yun Clan has so many disciples. If I just pick a few of them from each peak separately, it would not hurt them much anyway. Rest assured that I will not target any from you."

"Ke Cang Ju! You are going a little too far this time!" Qin Yue stood up furiously. Did Ke Cang Ju know what he was asking for!? Using formally accepted disciples of the Qing Yun Clan as experiments for his poison, and he is targeting to use the disciples of the other Elders? That would be a big slap across the faces of the other Elders!

All the Inner House disciples of the Qing Yun Clan knew what kind of place the Hidden Cloud Peak was. If they were taken away just like that, how would the other disciples of the respective Elders see their own Masters!?

Hua Yao laughed coldly: "My authority in the Qing Yun Clan cannot be compared to yours. I am seeking the permission to carry out your request and I will need the authority from yours truly. Authority that came with the position of the Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan which became yours to command. If you did not crave for that authority then, the coveted position of the Qing Yun Clan's Sovereign might have fallen into the hands of Mu Chen of the Cloud Treading Peak." Hua Yao imitated Ke Cang Ju's shrill high pitched voice perfectly.

Hua Yao's obvious insinuation made Qin Yue turn pale and he clenched his fists tightly. Using all his might, Qin Yue pushed down the surging urge to smash the mouth of the nefarious Ke Cang Ju that had uttered those threatening words.

He had been very tempted to kill Ke Cang Ju on countless

occasions, but he had held himself back for two good reasons. One was that Ke Cang Ju held evidence of Qin Yue's plot when he had poisoned his own Master, and the second reason was that Ke Cang Ju was extremely well versed with poison. Although he was not equipped with any spiritual powers, the myriad poisons Ke Cang Ju hid upon himself might result in them both to perish together.

Among the two reasons, both held Qin Yue's hand back, and even forced him to submit to Ke Cang Ju.

Qin Yue drew in a long breath, before he sat back down on the chair.

"I am sure you must have realised, that if I am to accede to your request, I would not be able to answer to the other Elders..." Succumbing to Ke Cang Ju's threat, Qin Yue did not have much of a choice but to comply.

Chapter 309: “Obliterate (4)”

“I will leave it to our Sovereign to decide on how to and what to do to make it work for us.” Hua Yao refused to budge even with Qin Yue’s change of tact. He was not Ke Cang Ju and he did not care if he angered Qin Yue, not even if it made Qin Yue want to kill him for it. The only thing that mattered to Hua Yao was whether he could stir up chaos within the Qing Yun Clan.

Qin Yue stared angrily at Ke Cang Ju and remained quiet for a long while before he finally blurted out: “Alright! I agree to it! But you have to promise not to touch any of the Elders’ direct disciples. And you have to give me the poison in the shortest time possible because I refuse to wait!” Blinded by his desire for revenge for his daughter’s murder, and buckling under Ke Cang Ju’s obvious threat, Qin Yue had no choice but to give in to Ke Cang Ju’s unreasonable demands.

Although Qin Yue was aware that Ke Cang Ju’s demand would bring him great resistance and anger from the other Elders, he was nevertheless confident, that the Qing Yun Clan was firmly under his control and even the displeasure of the Elders would not bring about anything catastrophic.

Qin Yue’s arrogance would soon make him eat his own words. He had thought that although Ke Cang Ju was being arrogant, he would know the limits and not overstep the boundaries. Little did he realise, the Ke Cang Ju before him had been replaced with a different person, and this person, Hua Yao, together with Jun Wu Xie had wanted nothing more than to wreck havoc and plunge the Qing Yun Clan into chaos as they had never seen!

“Rest assured, I am sure you will be satisfied with it.” His objective achieved, Hua Yao did not speak much after that and just nodded his head in agreement as Qin Yue continued to rant, but in his heart, he was silently laughing.

Despite all the grand plans he had for the Jun Family and the Emperor of Qi, Qin Yue was not aware that the very man right before him whom he was sharing his plans with, was plotting his demise right there in the Qing Yun Clan.

After Qin Yue was seemingly satisfied with the answer he got, he got up to leave.

As Qin Yue neared the door of the study, Hua Yao suddenly said: "Remember to keep that map safe."

Qin Yue's footsteps slowed and he froze a moment, as his back straightened. He remained silent for a while before he replied softly: "I know. It is very safe."

Qin Yue had his back to Hua Yao then or he might have caught a flash of joy that showed briefly in Hua Yao's eyes when he replied.

Qin Yue left, and only Hua Yao was left with the little black cat alone in the room.

Silence permeated, and finally Hua Yao laid his head on his palm and stared at the little black cat who had remained silent throughout all this while and asked: "Was your family the ones behind the killing of Qin Yu Yan and Jiang Chen Qing?"

Jun Wu Xie turned her furry head and looked calmly at Hua Yao. With Hua Yao's quick mind, it was not difficult for him to be able to piece the facts together.

"It was me." She replied honestly.

Hua Yao was taken aback at her honest reply and suddenly laughed out loud.

"So that's why you wanted to wipe out the Qing Yun Clan. You had expected today's events to happen all this time. You reasoned that if Qin Yue is allowed to react before you do, you would have insufficient power to retaliate, and you have decided to wipe out the Qing Yun Clan a step before they do?"

“Yes.” Jun Wu Xie said simply.

Hua Yao looked intently at the little black cat. Through that pair of cold eyes, he seemed to be able to get a glimpse of a sliver of the soul within that little body.

“After the matter with the Qing Yun Clan is settled, if you have the time, would you go back together with us?” He thought, at such a young age, and to possess such a calm and meticulous mind, made for an incredible combination.

“Didn’t I already agree to it?” The black cat narrowed its eyes and jumped off the table.

“Qin Yue did not seem to have any limits to Ke Cang Ju’s indulgent demands, as long as it did not threaten his position as the Sovereign. We are free to go do anything we want in the other peaks, anyway we want. Do not squander this opportunity.” Jun Wu Xie left behind these words and leapt nimbly out with the black cat’s body.

Hua Yao watched the black cat leap before his eyes and his smile reached those eyes in that rare instant. If it was Jun Xie, he just might be able to produce the medicine.

Chapter 310: “Fear Spreads (1)”

Qin Yue had flew into an almost uncontrollable rage at the news of Qin Yu Yan’s death and he could not wait to exact maniacal revenge upon the Jun Family and the Imperial Family of Qi, to the point that he inflicted unimaginable torment on the murderers of his only daughter even in his dreams.

Sadly for him, never in those dreams had he even thought that the very Jun Wu Xie, the very person responsible for the death of his beloved daughter, was right there in the Qing Yun Clan, listening in to his every word as he plotted his revenge.

Qin Yue wanted to annihilate the Jun Family, and Jun Wu Xie intended to bury the whole of the Qing Yun Clan.

One was hidden and the other had exposed all for his enemy to see, the game began here right in the deep recess of the Cloudy Peaks.

The might of the Qing Yun Clan did not allow Jun Wu Xie any mistake. If she failed to wipe out the Qing Yun Clan in its entirety, it would spell unmistakable doom for the Jun Family.

Returning to the disciples’ quarters, the little black cat entered its room under the watchful eyes of Qiao Chu, and exchanged its soul back to her original body.

Back in her own body, Jun Wu Xie sat up slowly, her eyes expressionless. The little black cat lay upon her lap, feeling rather tired as the it’s tiny soul had expended quite a bit of its energy to sustain Jun Wu Xie’s bigger body.

Jun Wu Xie looked out at the rays of sunlight that fell in through the window from the rising sun. Just like her mission, it was only just started to shine.

Hua Yao had gotten Qin Yue initial consent and the Qing Yun Clan was slated to see a wave of chaos coming. Within that chaos,

Jun Wu Xie would only need to prod the Qing Yun Clan lightly from here onwards, towards their doom.

Later that very same day, Hua Yao made an appearance as the sinister Ke Cang Ju, and led Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu, his two recently favoured “disciples”, and paid a visit to their closest neighbour, the Ash Cloud Peak.

The Ash Cloud Peak had previously been under Jiang Chen Qing. After the demise of Jiang Chen Qing, the running of the Ash Cloud Peak fell into the hands of his most senior disciple Gao Xiong. When the news of Qin Yu Yan’s death had arrived, news of Jiang Chen Qing’s passing was passed to the Ash Cloud Peak. All the disciples within the peak were still in mourning and Jiang Chen Qing’s three direct disciples were devastated that they could not even conduct a proper burial for their revered Teacher.

When Hua Yao and his two other “disciples” appeared before the Ash Cloud Peak, Gao Xiong was talking to his fellow disciples with his eyes red rimmed. Upon seeing “Ke Cang Ju”, he wiped his hand across his eyes and hurried forward in greeting.

“Elder Ke.”

Hua Yao glanced at Gao Xiong dismissively and said: “Under the orders of the Sovereign, I am here in the Ash Cloud to pick a few disciples to help out at the Hidden Cloud Peak.”

Gao Xiong froze, knowing exactly what kind of place the Hidden Cloud Peak was.

That was the place that all the disciples from the other peaks avoided at all times. As not only the common disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak but even Ke Cang Ju’s own direct disciples had been known to mysteriously disappear often, and though unspoken, they all knew where those disciples had disappeared to.

Now, Elder Ke himself had come before the Ash Cloud Peak personally to “select” disciples. The unexpected demand made Gao

Xiong felt a chill run up his spine.

Ke Cang Ju's definition of help meant that the disciples selected would soon give up their lives!

"Elder Ke, our Master had just passed away, do you....." Gao Xiong's voice was hoarse and sweat ran down his back. When Jiang Chen Qing was still around, he did not have much to fear even in the face of Ke Cang Ju as Jiang Chen Qing would have their backs. But with Jiang Chen Qing's passing, Ke Cang Ju had wasted no time to come right up to the Ash Cloud Peak and demanded that they hand disciples over to him. It was an obvious instance of bullying the peak without an Elder's protection!

Gao Xiong did not dare to express his rage and could only look at Ke Cang Ju helplessly.

"It is precisely because your Master is no longer around that I, as an Elder of the Qing Yun Clan am aggrieved and am offering to care for these poor disciples on your Teacher behalf. Gao Xiong, you better know your place and I am here merely just to select a few disciples. Rest assured, you and your two fellow senior disciples would be spared as I am gracious enough to leave Elder Jiang his favoured direct disciples to at least take up his mantle to carry on his legacy." Hua Yao declared domineeringly.

Chapter 311: “Fear Spreads (2)”

Gao Xiong’s face paled visibly. Those words could not have been any clearer. Ke Cang Ju had obviously insinuated that he would not be leaving without Ash Cloud disciples going back with him. The Ash Cloud Peak had lost Jiang Chen Qing’s protective wing and if he persisted to go against Ke Cang Ju, he would in turn become the one in trouble!

“This..... this way please, Elder Ke.” Gao Xiong steeled his heart as he uttered those hated words.

Hua Yao nodded in satisfaction and led Jun Wu Xie and Qiao Chu intrusively into the Ash Cloud Peak and walked obtrusively within.

The three of them attracted all the curious gazes from the disciples of the Ash Cloud Peak. In moments, Gao Xiong revealed Elder Ke’s purpose of visit was to “select” disciples from among them and the news spread fast and furiously.

At that moment, the curious gazes turned to ones of fury and they all sensed the impending danger. They all knew the consequences from being selected only too well, and what Ke Cang Ju’s true intentions were.

If chosen, and brought back to the Hidden Cloud Peak, they would only face the inescapable fate of untold torment.

All the disciples prayed, that Elder Ke would not “grace” them with his eye.

Qiao Chu followed behind Hua Yao, looking at the disciples shrinking back in terror, he suddenly felt like a butcher about to choose livestock.

“Why do I feel like I am a villain?” Qiao Chu asked, rubbing his nose.

“If they are given a chance to retaliate, they would in turn become the villains. The reason you feel pity for them now is

because we hold the upper hand now and they are victimised and can only submit themselves to our whims. If not for Jun Xie's ingenuity, we would be the ones persecuted and victimised instead." Hua Yao did not feel the least bit guilty. He had come to the Qing Yun Clan earlier than Qiao Chu, and in that period of a short half month, he had clearly seen the hidden hideous and ugly face of the mightiest clan throughout the lands.

The pitiful looking disciples cowering in fear before them now had been insufferably arrogant and egotistical before.

There had been several villages below the Cloudy Peaks before, but now, the villages had all disappeared and not a single person could be seen. Where had all the villagers gone? And why did they all disappear?

Within the Cloudy Peaks, every single one of them was guilty.

"You're right. If that is the case, I would choose to be the villain right from the start, and not make myself a victim if the real villains had made their move against me first instead." Qiao Chu said laughing.

Showing compassion to the Qing Yun Clan?

What a joke. Neither had the disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak pitied the monthly new recruits who were all tormented to death by Ke Cang Ju, but had partaken in deeds driving them further towards their doom.

The disciples of the Qing Yun Clan had all lost their conscience.

Within the whole of the Qing Yun Clan, those who had any sliver of conscience left had been killed by the supposed mightiest clan of the lands.

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu spoke in whispers and Jun Wu Xie looked at the two of them silently. She had heard their conversation and she raised an eyebrow as she continued to stare at the two youths seemingly silently thinking.

They were slightly younger than Mo Qian Yuan, but it seemed that they were a tad bit more mature in thinking.

Her newfound allies this time round, might not be such a handful to handle.

They prowled around the Ash Cloud Peak for half a day, almost driving the disciples there insane in fear, before they nonchalantly picked two disciples from among them.

The two selected disciples fell to their knees immediately, faces white as sheets, tears running down their faces, their eyes pleading hopefully at Gao Xiong who stood at one side observing the events, his heart wrenching in turmoil.

Gao Xiong was just the most senior disciple under Jiang Chen Qing, and he did not have the authority nor did he dare to defy the orders from Ke Cang Ju. Added to that fact was the loss of Jiang Chen Qing protection, Gao Xiong could only look away at the two disciples' pleading eyes and maintained a stoic expression as he saw Ke Cang Ju out of the Ash Cloud Peak.

Chapter 312: “Fear Spreads (3)”

The two disciples were brought back to the Hidden Cloud Peak, their faces resigned and pale. When they stood before the gates to the Hidden Cloud Peak, they started trembling uncontrollably, a pitiful sight.

News of “Ke Cang Ju” trip to seize disciples from the Ash Cloud Peak spread quickly throughout the Cloudy Peaks. The news reached the ears of the Elders but they did not give much reaction to it.

The Ash Cloud Peak had lost their Elder, Jiang Chen Qing, and it was deemed to be expected for them to suffer the injustice.

When Jiang Chen Qing was still around, the Ash Cloud Peak disciples had exploited their Elder’s close relations with Qin Yue and been arrogant in their demeanour, offending many of the disciples of the other peaks.

Now that Ke Cang Ju’s domineering ways were inflicted on those scoundrels, the other Elders thought that the Ash Cloud Peak deserved it and only felt that Ke Cang Ju was rather daring to target them so soon after the demise of their Elder.

But Qin Yue had always favoured Ke Cang Ju and the other Elders did not think much more on it.

The other peaks were spared and nonchalant but the Ash Cloud Peak disciples were still feeling jittery about the whole thing.

On the second day that the two disciples were brought to the Hidden Cloud Peak, Gao Xiong secretly tried to gather information on news of them. Ke Cang Ju might have claimed that they were only drafted to help out, Gao Xiong was nevertheless worried as Elder Ke was reputed to be insidious in his ways and he might very well just come back in a few days and Gao Xiong would be helpless to stop him.

So, he could only source for news of the two disciples discreetly and pray they would not meet with too miserable a fate and that would allow him to at least set the minds of the other disciples at ease a little.

After that day, the Ash Cloud Peak became very depressive. The loss of Jiang Chen Qing had already thrown the disciples of the peak into disarray when the news of his demise came in, and Ke Cang Ju had come knocking immediately bullying the helpless peak!

Without the authority of an Elder to resist, the Ash Cloud Peak could only be coerced into obedience.

By the third day of Ke Cang Ju's visit to the Ash Cloud Peak, Gao Xiong stopped receiving any news of the two disciples from his sources and he knew very well what that could only mean!

Disciples who disappeared from the Hidden Cloud Peak could only mean one thing. It meant that they have been killed and their remains are currently serving as nutrients for the plants.

Gao Xiong did not try to suppress that fact and the Ash Cloud Peak disciples soon came to know about it. That was the last straw that broke the camel's back and the Ash Cloud Peak disciples were struck by their helplessness.

After losing Jiang Chen Qing, the other Elders had turned a blind eye to their frailty and even the Sovereign had indulged Ke Cang Ju in the killing of disciples of the Qing Yun Clan. The disciples now started to fear for their own safety and developed hatred for the other peaks.

They were afraid that they would turn out to be the next target and they took it out on the other Elders' and the Sovereign's indifference to their plight.

They were disciples of the Qing Yun Clan just like the others. Why were they abandoned and allowed to be oppressed by Ke Cang

Ju so openly?

The indignation and hatred festered and they soon cut off all forms of contact with the other peaks. The Ash Cloud Peak was in a state of lockdown and their disciples were never seen outside again.

They were abandoned by the clan and had received no pity or consideration for the dire plight the peak was suffering under. They refused to become sacrificial sheep for any of the other peaks to take for granted.

Just days after the injustice suffered by the Ash Cloud Peak, the other Elders who had been indifferent suddenly stopped smiling.

As “Ke Cang Ju” started to make rounds with his two disciples to appear before their gates. They had come to ask for the exact same thing as they had asked from the Ash Cloud Peak.

The first to be hit was the Cloud Banner Peak!

Chapter 313: “Fear Spreads (4)”

The Elder of the Cloud Banner Peak was Cai Zhuo, a man past fifty. Before Qin Yue took over as the Sovereign, he was already an Elder of the Qing Yun Clan then. Due to his seniority, Cai Zhuo commanded quite a bit of respect among the other Elders and even Qin Yue deferred to him at times.

No one had expected that Ke Cang Ju would be so bold to go straight up to the Cloud Banner Peak and stand before the white bearded Cai Zhuo and snatch two disciples from right under his nose. Their domineering ways nearly made the Elder faint in rage!

Arrogance! Absolute tyranny!

The tragedy that befell the Ash Cloud Peak was replicated in the Cloud Banner Peak in just days apart! What was even more unacceptable was that Ke Cang Ju had seized the disciples in the face of Cai Zhuo’s refusal, totally disregarding the authority of an Elder.

When the Ash Cloud Peak’s disciples had been seized, the other peaks had thought it was due to the lack of an Elder’s protection that Ke Cang Ju dared dominate over them.

But in the case of the Cloud Banner Peak, Ke Cang Ju’s tyranny could clearly be seen!

Their Elder had been present, alive and kicking, but Ke Cang Ju had seized disciples right before his eyes! He acted like he owned the Cloudy Peaks!

Cai Zhuo was furious and his disciples persuaded him to go to Qin Yue. The senior Elder related Ke Cang Ju’s arrogance and tyranny in detail to the Sovereign and pleaded till his voice went hoarse, but he still did not manage to convince Qin Yue to act against Ke Cang Ju.

Qin Yue only tried to appease Cai Zhuo and promised that in the

next upcoming recruitment, he would allow Cai Zhuo first pick at the talents and did not say anything more about the matter.

When Cai Zhuo departed from Qin Yue's, his face became pale from his long suppressed rage and upon stepping out the gates, he dropped in a dead faint and had to be carried back to the Cloud Banner Peak by his flustered disciples!

With the Cloud Banner Peak as a prime example, the other Elders started to get worried. Ke Cang Ju had shown that he was capable of such atrocities and the Sovereign still chose to distant himself from the matter. Ke Cang Ju was hence allowed to act with impunity.

The Ash Cloud Peak and the Cloud Banner Peak were hit, and the tragedy was expected to come knocking upon their very own doors soon!

Losing a disciple or two did not affect the various Elders much. They were more concerned with the impunity that Ke Cang Ju was allowed to carry out his insidious deeds! Coming right up to the gates of the various peaks and seizing the Elders' disciples before their very own eyes. They could not swallow that prick to their pride!

The deeds that Ke Cang Ju carried out within the Hidden Cloud Peak was like an open secret within the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan. If the various Elders were to allow Ke Cang Ju to kidnap their own disciples before themselves, they would lose all sense of credibility before their disciples. That was as good as telling their own disciples that their Teacher was useless, powerless before tyranny, and unable to even protect his own disciples!

It was a slap across the faces of the various Elders!

And enough was enough!

From that moment, the Elders started to take serious note of any whispers of movement from the Hidden Cloud Peak and all the

disciples started to fear for their own safety.

But, tragedy still struck them.

Within weeks, Ke Cang Ju had swept through six peaks and the faces of the various Elders had all been slapped swollen by the domineering ways employed.

Ke Cang Ju was neither discreet nor merciful. He showed up arrogantly and carried Qin Yue's approval prominently before him, and forcibly seized disciples from before the respective Elders.

The famed and revered reputations of the Elders were shredded to pieces becoming non existent in a matter of weeks. Their disciples started to eye their Elders with distrust and the Elders could do nothing but let their faces turn red in shame.

Their dignity as Elders in tatters, the respect the disciples had for their Teachers shredded, rage and hatred exploded in the Qing Yun Clan. The Elders cursed at Ke Cang Ju incessantly in rage and hatred grew for Qin Yue for his indulgence and indifference to the sorry plight of the other Elders!

Chapter 314: “Mu Chen’s Unbending Will (1)”

While Hua Yao impersonated as Ke Cang Ju wrecked havoc and fanned the fire of hatred and fear throughout the Qing Yun Clan, Jun Wu Xie had not been idle. She used the nights to develop her spiritual powers with the Embellished Wooden Bead and picked suitable herbs in the Hidden Cloud Peak to cultivate elixirs with varying effects.

In the midst of all that, she made a trip down the Hidden Cloud Peak specially to hand over some medicine and herbs to correct and nurture specific complications in veins and arteries to Rong Heng.

Rong Heng had fully expected the youth that he had escorted to the Hidden Cloud Peak weeks earlier to be dead, and when he received the package, he had been flustered and could only thank Jun Wu Xie profusely. Before he left, he did not forget to remind Jun Wu Xie to be a little more careful in the Hidden Cloud Peak and that Ke Cang Ju had been stirring up quite a bit of trouble in the others peaks, so he should stay within the Hidden Cloud Peak to avoid any acts of retaliation from the other peaks.

The disciples of the other peaks were fearful and held a lot of hatred for the Hidden Cloud Peak, and they might exact their revenge on any stray Hidden Cloud Peak disciples.

Jun Wu Xie listened to his well intentioned warning, but she remained silent. She was very glad that chaos was running wild among the peaks.

Only when the whole of the Qing Yun Clan were held in the thralls of fear could her scheme proceed as planned!

Every few days, she went with Hua Yao and Qiao Chu to carry out their “insidious deeds”. Jun Wu Xie managed to get a good grasp of

the differing situations among the differing peaks as well as the different personalities of the different Elders. Some were calm, some were fiery, some gloomy, but they all fell victim to Hua Yao's tyranny as he held the banner of the Sovereign's approval of his actions high over his head, their revered reputations shredded to pieces and almost non-existent.

The wave of chaos swept over and hung heavy over the Cloudy Peaks and all the disciples and even the Elders, could not find sleep well in the middle of all the mayhem.

After sowing the seeds of fear within the various peaks of many Elders, Jun Wu Xie set her eyes on her last target, the Cloud Treading Peak of Mu Chen's!

The Cloud Treading Peak was the least conspicuous among the twelve peaks and it was the peak with the least number of disciples. Within the whole mountain, the total disciples number only slightly over twenty. The immense peak only housed Mu Chen and over twenty disciples all year round, and it usually looked pitifully sparse and uninhabited.

Compared to the other peaks, where they could easily round up hundreds of disciples, Mu Chen's numbers looked especially pathetic.

Mu Chen seldom accepted disciples, as he would rather not have disciples than to accept unsuitable candidates. If they did not meet the mark, he would choose to go without recruiting a single person. Added to that, Qin Yue had always suppressed Mu Chen's power secretly further adding on to the dismal situation in the Cloud Trading Peak.

"Elder Mu Chen seems to be rather different compared to the other Elders." Qiao Chu remarked, rubbing his chin. He had lived luxuriously and reveled in the tyranny with Hua Yao as they terrorized the various peaks, and he felt his chin was getting a little rounded.

“Mmm, if the Qing Yun Clan had a side that was clean, that would be only the Cloud Treading Peak. The Elder might be very young, but he is a steady and stalwart man. Righteous and everything that I had heard about him did not implicate him in any immoral or shady deeds. He is the only exception among all that I know about the other peaks.” Hua Yao nodded in agreement, as he shared the good impression he had of Mu Chen.

Jun Wu Xie stood at the foot of the Cloud Treading Peak and raised her head to look towards the summit.

At the summit, she seemed to be able to see a figure, dressed in blue, the robes flapping in the wind.

That man seemed to be looking in their direction.

“Can we use Mu Chen?” Hua Yao looked at the silent Jun Xie. The order that the Elders were to be terrorized were chosen by Jun Xie, and he had placed Mu Chen to be the last. On their way here, Jun Wu Xie had hinted with her words that made Hua Yao understand that Mu Chen was perceived to be different from the other Elders of the Qing Yun Clan.

Be it his personality or circumstances, he did not fit into the Qing Yun Clan at present.

“Whether he can be useful, will be his own choice.” Jun Wu Xie lowered her head, looking thoughtful.

Hua Yao smiled in silent agreement.

Qiao Chu laughed out loud and exclaimed: “Let’s put together our arrogant and tyrannical faces and set forth!”

The only reply he got to his boisterous exclamation were two sets of cold stares directed right at him!

Chapter 315: “Mu Chen’s Unbending Will (2)”

Within the Cloud Treading Peak, Mu Chen stood at the summit with all his disciples around him. His eyes were resolute as he observed the slowly approaching form of Ke Cang Ju.

“Elder Mu, it has been a rather long time.” Hua Yao had become very good at imitating Ke Cang Ju’s shrill cackle by now, and coupled with his sinister tone, his voice sent chills down the spine of the disciples before them.

“The Cloud Treading Peak does not welcome Elder Ke, we would request that Elder Ke depart from here.” Mu Chen’s face was stoic and he did not hesitate in asking them to leave.

Jun Wu Xie observed Mu Chen silently thinking he was indeed different from the other Elders.

In the other peaks, the Elders had known of “Ke Cang Ju’s” intentions but had submitted to Qin Yue’s approval and allowed their disciples to be sacrificed. None of them had reacted like Mu Chen, who had not immediately refused them entry and protected his disciples without any deference nor hesitation.

The disciples who stood by Mu Chen did not show any fear in their eyes but had been resolute and defiant. Within those disciples, Jun Wu Xie spotted Rong Heng, who stood just behind Mu Chen. He had been shocked to see Jun Wu Xie for a moment, but he recovered quickly and his stance grew just as defiant as his fellow disciples.

“Ke Cang Ju” heard Mu Chen’s impolite words and his sinister countenance quickly turned to be one of anger. He said sneeringly: “Mu Chen, seeing that we are both Elders, I shall choose not to take offence with your attitude. But you should at least know your place! The purpose of my trip here to select disciples from you was

the Sovereign's idea. Would you dare say your authority as an Elder overrides the Sovereign's?"

A string of curses erupted and Mu Chen's face darkened. The faces of the disciples behind Mu Chen started to turn red with anger hearing the nasty words.

"I just found out that Brother Hua is getting rather skilled at attracting hatred to himself." Impressed by Hua Yao's ongoing tirade giving rise to the rage starting to boil over among the Cloud Treading Peak disciples, Qiao Chu could not help himself but whisper to Jun Wu Xie in praise.

"Hasn't he always been so?" Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow in query. Hua Yao's personality had seemed cold and unfeeling, and he had always had a poisonous tongue, and he had seemed to be capable of driving people up the wall with his gift of the gab alone.

"That's true." Qiao Chu nodded discreetly, having experienced it himself many times.

Hua Yao continued: "Elder Mu, I would suggest you accept our peaceful request now and not make things difficult for yourself. My task of the selection of disciples from the various peaks are under the direct orders of the Sovereign himself. The other Elders had been cooperative and I would ask our Elder Mu to not put up a futile struggle, as it is only a matter of merely two disciples."

Mu Chen's jaw was tightly clenched and his face dark with anger. He simply replied: "I will not accept those orders!"

Hua Yao's face became even more sinister. "Looks like our Elder Mu is bent on defying the Sovereign's orders? Even as an Elder, defying the orders of the Sovereign is a crime even you cannot shoulder!"

After Qin Yue assumed leadership of the Qing Yun Clan as the Sovereign, the powers of the various Elders had been slowly diminished. Qin Yue soon held the power to reprimand and punish

an Elder unilaterally. Moreover, Mu Chen and Qin Yue had been on bad terms and it was widely known throughout the Qing Yun Clan.

Mu Chen had always laid low and avoided drawing attention to himself and the Cloud Treading Peak all this time just to avoid giving Qin Yue any excuse to act against him. But if he were to be stuck with the crime of defying the orders of the Sovereign, Qin Yue would gain a perfect reason to be rid of Mu Chen henceforth!

Everyone present was acutely aware of what “Ke Cang Ju” had meant.

Without waiting for Mu Chen to respond, Rong Heng who stood behind him stepped forward.

“Elder Ke, you need not say anymore. I’ll go with you.”

Mu Chen was at a loss for words as he stared at Rong Heng who had volunteered to sacrifice himself for everyone. Soon another Cloud Treading Peak disciple stepped up as well, showing his willingness to follow Elder Ke back to the Hidden Cloud Peak.

This situation was absolutely unheard of! In the other peaks, all the disciples had stayed far away from Hua Yao, fearful that they would be chosen to go to the Hidden Cloud Peak. And the chosen ones had been completely terrified and knelt before their Teacher in pleading sobs, for the Elder to save them from their unavoidable fate.

Chapter 316: “Mu Chen’s Unbending Will (3)”

All the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan knew that if they ended up in the Hidden Cloud Peak, that would also mean the end of their lives.

But the disciples of the Cloud Treading Peak reacted differently. They knew that only death awaited them if they were to go to the Hidden Cloud Peak, but in order to prevent Qin Yue from having an excuse to lay hands on Mu Chen, they chose to sacrifice themselves and protect Mu Chen!

It made one wonder just how highly revered Mu Chen was to his disciples that they were willing to disregard their own safety and giving up their own lives for him.

Jun Wu Xie observed all this without a word and her gaze turned to Mu Chen.

The disciples were willing to die for him, what would he do?

Mu Chen grabbed Rong Heng and the other disciple and pushed them behind him before saying to Hua Yao: “I will not allow you to take a single disciple from the Cloud Treading Peak. If you insist, you will have to do it over my dead body! Please leave, Elder Ke. Go to Qin Yue if you please, or do whatever you please in the Qing Yun Clan, but I, Mu Chen will remain here, standing against you. I have said my piece, as long as I am still the Elder of the Cloud Treading Peak as the master of these disciples, nobody can force my disciples to do anything against their will!”

Mu Chen did not wait for Hua Yao to reply and just turned, pushing his disciples back. He had made his stand clear and his disciples are not to be preyed upon!

“I feel like I can grow to like Mu Chen, he’s much better than those pompous hypocrites in the other peaks.” Qiao Chu watched

Mu Chen leave with his disciples, giving him two thumbs up in his heart for his righteousness.

“That personality of Mu Chen would have gotten himself killed if I was the real Ke Cang Ju.” Hua Yao got rid of his sinister expression and reverted to his usual calm.

“Dragons have scales that go against the grain, and so do humans. Mu Chen puts up with all the oppression thrown at him but if someone presses the wrong buttons, he would not tolerate it anymore.” Jun Wu Xie was glad that Mu Chen had reacted in the way he did. If Mu Chen had acted just like the other Elders and allowed Hua Yao to bring their disciples away, she would not have considered working with him at all.

“This thing here, do I still hide it in the Cloud Treading Peak?” Qiao Chu asked, holding a little cloth bag in his hand.

Jun Wu Xie shook her head.

“We need to sit down and talk to Mu Chen. A real discussion.” Jun Wu Xie said.

“That is provided Mu Chen is still willing to see us. Seeing his reaction earlier, he looked like he was about to kill Brother Hua.” Qiao Chu did not think there was any chance of them sitting down and holding a civil conversation.

“He will see us.” Jun Wu Xie assured.

“You have a plan?” Hua Yao turned to Jun Xie, feeling that the little kid had no end to ingenious ideas in his head.

Jun Wu Xie waved Hua Yao over, and Hua Yao pushed his ear over.

Soft words were whispered into his ear.

Hua Yao’s eyes sparkled and said: “This might just work.”

Moments later, Hua Yao and his disciples remained in the Cloud Treading Peak despite the earlier repeated requests for them to

leave by Mu Chen. They started roaming around within the peak and the Cloud Treading Peak disciples thought they had left. They went about with their routine tasks and did not think that.....

Mu Chen sat within his study, his face dark, and his clenched fists thumped hard on the table! He clenched his jaw as he stared at the securely locked doors before him, his eyes raging with hatred that threatened to explode.

Suddenly, Rong Heng stormed in in a fluster.

“Elder Mu! Elder Ke has kidnapped Little Lin back to the Hidden Cloud Peak!”

Mu Chen stood up suddenly and his chair crashed back onto the floor, utter disbelief in his eye.

Ke Cang Ju had carried it too far!

“Keep all the other disciples within the Cloud Treading Peak and do not allow them to step out! I am going to the Hidden Cloud Peak!” Mu Chen gritted his teeth. He had not thought that Ke Cang Ju could be so despicable in the face of his clear refusal. Ke Cang Ju had deigned to ignore him completely and forcefully abducted one of the Cloud Treading Peak’s disciples!

Mu Chen could not make himself hold back any longer, the long years of suppression on served to fuel the fire that raged within his chest that was about to spew forth. After giving Rong Heng some instructions, he rushed to the Hidden Cloud Peak in the shortest time possible!

If Ke Cang Ju dared to harm a hair on his disciple, he will bury the whole of the Hidden Cloud Peak together with him!

Chapter 317: “Sheep turned Predator (1)”

In the Hidden Cloud Peak, Qiao Chu looked at the Cloud Treading Peak disciple lying on the floor that he had knocked out unwillingly.

“I think, when Mu Chen see this, Mu Chen’s first reaction will definitely be to charge at us, with flaming swords in hand, and not to..... sit down and talk things through.” Qiao Chu had thought that Jun Xie had come up with another ingenious idea, but it had turned out to be just a simple and brutal abduction!

Just grab any Cloud Treading Peak disciple and knock him out before bringing him back. What kind of a plan was that!?

They wanted to work with Mu Chen, and not to make him hate them more right?

“Relax, with his disciple in our hands, he would not do anything rash.” Jun Wu Xie sat on one side, sipping at her tea calmly.

Qiao Chu just felt like crying at that moment. He had become a kidnapper! Little Xie had shown himself to possess a quick and meticulous mind, was he turning into a serial offender.....

“He might not be rash and take any drastic actions, but would he even cooperate with us after this?” Without even exchanging a single word about working together, they had surreptitiously abducted Mu Chen’s disciple. Although the reason for that was just to make Mu Chen come to them, but the method employed might be a little too brutal.

“He will, as long as we share the same objective.” Jun Wu Xie was perfectly confident of it.

After just a while, shouts sounded from the courtyard outside and the locked door was heavily kicked wide open. A furious Mu Chen stood staring at “Ke Cang Ju” within the room, his eyes calling for murder. His gaze quickly swung to the unconscious

disciple lying on the ground at the side and quickly scanned his body for any wounds, heaving an obvious sigh of relief when he did not see any.

“Ke Cang Ju! What are you up to!? Release my disciple at once!” Mu Chen shouted, his ring spirit summoned, into a sharp sword gripped in his hand.

But Mu Chen had not expected that “Ke Cang Ju” would just remain silent, and the reply actually came from the youth he had first chosen to be accepted into the Cloud Treading Peak instead.

“Elder Mu, we have your disciple in our hands. If you do not want anything to happen to him, you had better do as we say.” Jun Wu Xie raised to eyes to throw her icy gaze threateningly on Mu Chen.

Qiao Chu almost choked in surprise. Even Jun Xie’s words had sounded exactly like a bandit’s!

Mu Chen stared in rage and frustration at Jun Wu Xie. His rage was towards his helplessness against the situation, and his frustration was directed more at the drastic change he saw in Jun Xie.

When he had first seen the petite youth, Mu Chen had been awed by Jun Xie’s precise diagnosis and proposed treatment. He had greatly anticipated that the youth could join the Cloud Treading Peak as a disciple, but alas, fate had been cruel and Jun Xie had been forcibly taken by Ke Cang Ju.

In the first few days, he had been worried for Jun Xie, afraid that the prodigious petite youth would suffer under the tormenting hand of Ke Cang Ju. But before long, Ke Cang Ju had brought Jun Xie and another disciple to frequently go around the various peaks. That was when Mu Chen realised that his worry had been unfounded. Ke Cang Ju might be malicious and cruel, but the petite youth’s knowledge in Medicine was rare and extremely hard to come by. It was a relief that even Ke Cang Ju would hesitate to

destroy a genius that had joined the Qing Yun Clan.

Nevertheless, Mu Chen had never thought that after Jun Xie was accepted as a disciple of Ke Cang Ju, he even managed to gain his trust. Recently, he had actually grown to be like Ke Cang Ju in manners, and learnt to use threats.

Mu Chen was deeply saddened at that moment. The youth should have excelled in Medicine but had instead been twisted by Ke Cang Ju into such a pitiable state. His hatred for Ke Cang Ju deepened, and he bemoaned the “change” that had come over Jun Xie.

“Jun Xie, do you really know what kind of a person you are following? Ke Cang Ju is a demon! How many in the Qing Yun Clan have died under those hands!? Do not persist in your depravation! You are still very young and you have a long road ahead of you!” Mu Chen persuaded as he remembered the very good and lasting impression the youth had left on him the first time, and also due to his guilt of his inability to rescue Jun Xie from Ke Cang Ju, and he could it not help but to attempt to pull the youth back from the abyss.

Chapter 318: “Sheep turned Predator (2)”

Qiao Chu was having a such a hard time keeping himself from laughing out loud that he even had a ridiculous notion that he was about to die from holding it in.

Mu Chen actually still think that Jun Xie was just a blind sheep led astray by the insidious “Ke Cang Ju”!? My God! Wake up and open your eyes! That sheep swallows its enemies whole!

Jun Wu Xie ignored Mu Chen well intentioned persuasion and shot Qiao Chu a frosty glance, who was still suffering from trying to hold his mirth in, and Qiao Chu immediately whipped out his dagger and pressed it against the neck of the unconscious disciple on the floor.

“Now, close the door.” Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes as she shot the command at Mu Chen.

Mu Chen sighed sadly, looking in disbelief at Jun Wu Xie and closed the door after a while.

“Sit.” Jun Wu Xie then said curtly.

Mu Chen’s face darkened and his gaze shifted to the silent Hua Yao, as in his eyes, Jun Wu Xie’s actions were all due to “Ke Cang Ju’s” instructions.

“Ke Cang Ju, release my disciple now. Direct all your wrath on me instead.”

“.....” Hua Yao shrugged, proclaiming innocence, as he had not spoken a word.

“Mu Chen, you hate Qin Yue?” Jun Wu Xie asked suddenly.

Mu Chen’s eyes turned cold, and he bit his lip, remaining silent.

“If you are presented with an opportunity to exact revenge for your mercilessly murdered father, what would you do?” Jun Wu Xie continued.

Mu Chen's eyes showed confusion. He had no idea where Jun Xie's words were leading to. Was it a plot by Ke Cang Ju? What was Ke Cang Ju really after?

"Ke Cang Ju! Spit it out if you have something to say! Do not play games with me!" Mu Chen said furiously.

"....." Hua Yao turned his head away from Mu Chen, refusing to give Mu Chen any acknowledgement.

Why was it that when Jun Xie was the one speaking but the blame had instead fallen on him!?

"Ke Cang Ju!" Mu Chen stood up in fury. "I know that Qin Yue had always wanted to get rid of me. You had helped him with the murder of my father then. If you intend to take me out here today for Qin Yue, come at me! I will not run, but this has nothing to do with my disciple! Release him!"

Hua Yao took a deep breath and looked at the fuming Mu Chen, and without even bothering to change his voice, he said: "Stupid, do you still not understand?"

"??? What?" Mu Chen was stunned. Ke Cang Ju's voice had sounded totally different from his usual one, it had been crisp and clear, and sounded nothing like the voice of a middle aged man, but like that of a exuberant youth, full of vigor.

"It wasn't my idea to make you come here today, and it wasn't Qin Yue, but the boy standing before you!" Hua Yao raised his hand and pointed, right at the nose of Jun Xie.

Jun Wu Xie stood unmoving in the path of the pointing finger and nodded nonchalantly.

Mu Chen grew more shocked, as he looked at Jun Xie in confusion, unable to link the events unfolding before him to the young boy that had just been admitted into the Qing Yun Clan for barely a month.

This young boy was the one responsible for the abduction of his

disciple?

The boy was the one who was forced to come to the Hidden Cloud Peak?

But why?

Mu Chen could not figure it out at all. Why had Jun Xie had done all this? He had only met the boy once before this. Why was Jun Xie making such a big show out of it all?

What further confused him was When did “Ke Cang Ju” turn so mild tempered, that he would allow a disciple to create such a ruckus before himself?

“What is going on?” Mu Chen did not understand what was going on.

“I want the Qing Yun Clan to disappear from the face of these lands.” Jun Wu Xie said simply.

Mu Chen’s eyes bulged, speechless in his disbelief, and wondering if he had just heard the words correctly.

The petite youth wanted the Qing Yun Clan obliterated!!?

Chapter 319: “Sheep turned Predator (3)”

Mu Chen turned subconsciously to look at “Ke Cang Ju”. “Ke Cang Ju” was Qin Yue’s trusted right hand man, and if those words reached Qin Yue’s ears, that youth would not be spared.

Surprisingly, “Ke Cang Ju” did not react, looking like those words did not concern him at all.

“Don’t you want to? Exact revenge for your father? Annihilate the mighty Qing Yun Clan that had become rotted to the core?” Jun Wu Xie asked of Mu Chen.

Mu Chen turned his head to look at Jun Wu Xie, as a thought suddenly came into his head. “You are a member of the Jun Family from the Kingdom of Qi?”

“Yes.”

Mu Chen finally understood why Jun Wu Xie held so much hatred for the Qing Yun Clan. News of Qin Yu Yan’s and Jiang Chen Qing’s demise had spread throughout the Qing Yun Clan, and though Qin Yue had not embarked on his revenge on the Kingdom of Qi, Qin Yue was determined that the Qi Kingdom must be obliterated.

Jun Xie’s move against the Qing Yun Clan must have been brought on by the need to protect the Jun Family.

“Aren’t you being a little too bold? If Qin Yue find out about your background, you will never be able to leave these peaks.” Mu Chen said worriedly. He felt no enmity against Jun Xie but instead, just as Jun Xie said, his hatred for Qin Yue was no less than that held by Jun Xie.

Jun Wu Xie shrugged her shoulders and replied: “I’ve come all the way to the Qing Yun Clan and have gotten myself mired too deep into it to concern myself with that. If the Qing Yun Clan survives, it would only mean certain death for me. But I strongly

believe, that I'll walk out of the Cloudy Peaks alive.

Her grandfather and uncle were still waiting for her in the Lin Palace, so she must not fail, and neither could she afford to fail!

“Ke Cang Ju and Qin Yue are on extremely good terms. Are you not afraid he will go against you?” Mu Chen insinuated strongly as he turned to observe the silent “Ke Cang Ju”. “Ke Cang Ju” was giving out very different vibes at the moment, but Ke Cang Ju and Qin Yue were essentially cut from the same cloth.

He could not believe that Jun Xie could be so unconcerned with exposing all his plans right in front of “Ke Cang Ju” and that “Ke Cang Ju” had shown no reaction at all.

Jun Wu Xie's eyes chilled and she said softly: “People are dead are unable to do anything against me.”

Mu Chen stared blankly at Jun Xie, not understanding what he meant.

“I'm sorry, but I am not the Ke Cang Ju that you are referring to.” Hua Yao interjected suddenly and he rolled up his sleeves. Without the cover of the sleeves, Hua Yao's unaltered skin on both his arms were glaringly exposed before Mu Chen's eyes. The smooth and fair skin on the arms contrasted greatly with the rough and wrinkled skin on his hands. The stark difference alone told Mu Chen everything.

“You are not Ke Cang Ju?” Mu Chen's voice was incredulous. He had not seen Ke Cang Ju much, but he remembered that hideous face so clearly. The man who stood before him, regardless whether in terms of countenance or body shape, looked exactly as the real Ke Cang Ju had. Mu Chen believed not even Qin Yue would be able to tell the difference.

“No.” Hua Yao nodded.

“How is that possible? No technique exists in the world that could replicate a person's looks so completely!” Mu Chen could not

make himself believe what he was seeing. But the fact remained that the man who was standing before him was an exact replica of Ke Cang Ju, and no matter how meticulous one was with his imitation, such a complete replication was unheard of!

“What if this happens?” Jun Wu Xie threw Hua Yao a glance and Hua Yao raised his hand right before Mu Chen’s eyes. He showed his finger joints clearly to Mu Chen before he made his fingers grow by another half in length. Mu Chen’s eyes widened, and he was left speechless after Hua Yao shrank his fingers back to normal.

Mu Chen could not speak for a long while as he had never met anyone who could change the structure of his bones at will.

“If you are not him, then where is the real Ke Cang Ju?” Mu Chen asked.

Jun Wu Xie raised her eyes, and said in an expressionless tone: “Dead.”

Chapter 320: “Sheep turned Predator (4)”

Mu Chen gasped deeply. When Jun Wu Xie had said “People who are dead are unable to do anything against me”, he had thought of this possibility, but now that Jun Wu Xie had confirmed it, the realization that that was the truth shocked him to the bone nevertheless.

“Although Ke Cang Ju did not possess any spiritual powers, but he was highly proficient with his poisons. How did you manage to kill him?” Mu Chen was very curious. When he was younger, he had thought to kill Ke Cang Ju in revenge for his father’s cold blooded murder, but Ke Cang Ju’s arsenal of poisons had prevented him from carrying it out.

The Jun Xie before his eyes was only a young sprouting youth! Although he had another two people with him, but judging from the voice and the unblemished skin shown by the person who impersonated Ke Cang Ju, he should only be around Qiao Chu’s age.

The widely feared and terrifying Ke Cang Ju was killed by these three young youths? It was just unbelievable.

Qiao Chu who was standing at the side smirked secretly. Ke Cang Ju was highly proficient with poison? That was before he met Jun Xie. Jun Xie’s dominance over Ke Cang Ju was total and complete, without having a single hair on himself harmed!

He suddenly thought of how Ke Cang Ju had looked when he died and a chill still ran down his spine.

Jun Xie was a sheep that instead preyed on predators and did not even spit out the bones after swallowing them whole!

“How he was killed is no longer important. What’s important is that he is dead, and Hua Yao here has taken his place and position as the head of the Hidden Cloud Peak.” Jun Wu Xie said simply as

she could not be bothered to explain in detail.

Mu Chen did not probe further. After knowing Jun Wu Xie's objective and affirming that she possessed abilities capable of getting rid of Ke Cang Ju, he had developed a certain level of trust for Jun Wu Xie.

As just for the fact that Jun Wu Xie had killed Ke Cang Ju, Jun Wu Xie had become his benefactor, who had exact revenge for his father's merciless murder on his behalf!

"Your intention to wipe out the Qing Yun Clan might not happen so easily as Qin Yue is very careful of his own protection. All the resident experts invited reside within his the Blue Cloud Peak that he commands and even if a blue leveled spirit expert attacks him, it would only bring him death. Unless you have a purple leveled spirit user with you, you would not be able to even get close to him, much less to kill him." Mu Chen's brows were furrowed. If Qin Yue could be so easily killed, he would not have had to put up with so many years of suppression.

"These all not of concern to us. The number of expert exponents present would not change anything in our plans." Qiao Chu grumbled from the side. Even Ke Cang Ju who was so highly proficient in poison had crumbled before Jun Xie without him needing to raise a single blade. How difficult could it be to take on the all brawn and no brains experts?

Mu Chen turned to Qiao Chu, staring at the dagger still pressed against the neck of his disciple, and his face darkened immediately.

"Since our goals are in tandem, can you release my disciple now?" Mu Chen asked through gritted teeth.

Qiao Chu did not move, but turned his head to Jun Xie. Only after Jun Xie had nodded, did Qiao Chu sheath his dagger and picked the unconscious disciple up carrying him upon his shoulder to go out the door. He then dropped the disciple unceremoniously upon the ground.

Mu Chen's mouth twitched, but he did not say anything.

“You do not need to do anything to have Qin Yue killed, I will handle that. Even for the annihilation of the Qing Yun Clan, there is not much that you need to do. You will only need to fan the emotions of the other Elders into a frenzy, and that will be enough.” Jun Wu Xie said slowly. With Hua Yao's perfect impersonation of Ke Cang Ju, he had saved them a lot of effort and she did not need to execute the plans she initially had with Mu Chen anymore.

Getting Mu Chen involved would smoothen the progress of their ploy, and it was because Mu Chen's Cloud Treading Peak was the only saving grace that had remained clean within the thoroughly rotted Qing Yun Clan. Jun Wu Xie's plan might have been to wipe out the whole Qing Yun Clan, but she held her principles near. She would not harm the innocents.

Chapter 321: “Sheep turned Predator (5)”

Not just the Cloud Treading Peak disciples, even the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan’s Outer House would be spared. Those disciples did not really belong to the Qing Yun Clan and there was no need to hurt the innocent.

“Fan emotions?” Mu Chen was puzzled.

Jun Wu Xie explained: “During this period, Ke Cang Ju had prominently flaunted the authority that Qin Yue had given him and offended all the other Elders of the Qing Yun Clan completely. Qin Yue had shielded Ke Cang Ju’s actions tightly and the other Elders are feeling very edgy. If the son of the last Sovereign stood forward at this moment, I believe the other Elders would jump at the chance to rally behind you to drive the Qing Yun Clan in chaos. By that time, Qin Yue’s time in the Qing Yun Clan would be up.”

“How are you going to do it?” Mu Chen grew more and more shocked the more he heard. He realised that the turmoil that had been brewing within the Qing Yun Clan had been stirred up by these three youths singlehandedly. And if he was not wrong, the one making the decisions among the trio, should be Jun Xie, the youngest one among them!

He was able to pull off a plot on such a big scale at such a young age. Mu Chen could not imagine what kind of environment Jun Xie had grown up in.

And he wondered how mighty the Jun Family was that they dared take on the topmost clan across the lands, the Qing Yun Clan!

“You wouldn’t understand even if I told you.” Jun Wu Xie waved her hand tiredly. She really wasn’t too good at explaining things in detail.

Seeing that Jun Xie was refusing to say more, Mu Chen stopped

himself from probing anymore.

“After the Qing Yun Clan is obliterated, it would cease to exist. If you do not have any pressing business or anywhere else to go, you can go to the Lin Palace in the Kingdom of Qi.” Jun Wu Xie gave it a thought, and decided to provide Mu Chen with a good alternative after everything. She believed that Mu Chen would have no intention to stay on in the Qing Yun Clan, that had turned rotten to the core under Qin Yue’s hands.

Mu Chen might still be young, but he possessed respectable skills and knowledge in the nurturing and development of veins and arteries. And no matter how highly skilled Jun Wu Xie was in Medicine, she could not split herself. To sufficiently sustain the medical needs of the hundred thousand strong Rui Lin Army, needed more than the strength of a lone Jun Wu Xie.

If she could enlist the help of Mu Chen and his disciples, the Rui Lin Army will rise up faster!

Jun Wu Xie did not only plan to just make herself stronger, but to strengthen every single person in the Rui Lin Army as well. Only when the Jun Family held more chips within their hands, can she ensure her grandfather and uncle to live a life of leisure without any worries.

Mu Chen stared at Jun Wu Xie and he remained silent for a moment. “If you help me to kill Qin Yue, I will bring my people to the Lin Palace and reside there for three years. Within those three years, I will exhaust all that I hold in repayment for what I will owe you.”

Jun Xie had killed Ke Cang Ju, and if he were to kill Qin Yue as well, Mu Chen vengeance would be exacted. He did not want to owe Jun Xie that debt of gratitude and had decided he would repay him with his skills in medicine.

“That is a deal.” Jun Wu Xie nodded, in satisfaction, not minding the fact that Mu Chen saw through her underlying intentions.

Intelligent people knew what they should do without having to prod them.

The discussion on their secret cooperation was finished, but Mu Chen was hesitant to leave just like that. He turned to Jun Wu Xie and said: “The news that I came storming into the Hidden Cloud Peak must have spread to the ears of the other Elders. I cannot walk out of here just like that.”

Jun Wu Xie produced an elixir within her hands and threw it to Mu Chen.

“Swallow it.”

Mu Chen swallowed the elixir without hesitation and stepped out to bring his unconscious disciple back.

“What did you give him?” Qiao Chu stared after Mu Chen as he left, his curiosity highly piqued as he bugged Jun Wu Xie.

“Mu Chen and Ke Cang Ju were opposing enemies for a long time. Ke Cang Ju would not allow Mu Chen to bring his disciple back so easily. Hence..... he would have to pay a certain price.” Jun Wu Xie lowered her eyes. They needed to put on an act, and a complete act is required. Mu Chen would be a good ally, and he was smarter than Mo Qian Yuan.

Chapter 322: “Reeling In The Net (1)”

Soon, a piece of news spreaded within the Qing Yun Clan. Ke Cang Ju had gone to the Cloud Treading Peak and forcibly snatched a disciple. The Elder of the Cloud Treading Peak, Mu Chen, had then stormed into the Hidden Cloud Peak alone to save his disciple. Mu Chen had suddenly fell ill after he returned and his high fever had not subsided. Even Qin Yue had provided treatment but Mu Chen was still bedridden after three days, and was still in bad shape.

Falling into such a state after returning from the Hidden Cloud Peak. It was deemed to be obvious by the other Elders that Ke Cang Ju's proficient use of poison must have been the cause. Mu Chen and Ke Cang Ju had been bitter enemies for a long time and for Ke Cang Ju to allow Mu Chen to retrieve his disciple back to the Cloud Treading Peak, Mu Chen must have suffered under Ke Cang Ju's deliberate spitefulness and had poisoned Mu Chen, bringing about the sudden illness!

The other Elders had still been puzzled by how Mu Chen had managed to bring his disciple back before and the reason could not be any clearer now!

And the news brought the other Elders' fear and hatred for Ke Cang Ju to new heights!

No matter how much hatred Ke Cang Ju held for Mu Chen, Mu Chen was still an Elder of the Qing Yun Clan after all, a respectable position they both held. But Ke Cang Ju had just gone ahead and poisoned Mu Chen without hesitation, showing scant regard for the revered status of being an Elder of the Qing Yun Clan!

Even the Elders that had held no enmity towards Ke Cang Ju soon started to feel threatened by his tyranny.

Mu Chen had been poisoned by Ke Cang Ju openly, and the other Elders started to feel threatened of their own safety. Ke Cang Ju

had already dared to take their disciples from them, what more atrocities would he do?

The Elders thought back on the chaos and fear that had spread before, the depressed and disappointed eyes their own disciples had shown them and their hatred for Ke Cang Ju started to brew and bubble.

An Elder had gone to the Cloud Treading Peak, bearing tonics as a gift, his face sorrowful in concern, on the pretense of paying a visit on the ill Mu Chen, but was actually there to find out what kind of torment Ke Cang Ju had put Mu Chen under.

Mu Chen had put on a pitiful face of helplessness and said weakly: “Ke Cang Ju holds the Sovereign’s trust strongly, while I am only an Elder in name with no authority. When he decides he wants to snatch my disciple from me, or anything else that he wants to do against me, there is nothing I can do but to tolerate and suffer under his oppression. The Sovereign himself stands behind Ke Cang Ju, what else can I do? Await death to claim me I suppose.”

Mu Chen’s defeated words made the other Elder’s heart wince, and told of the hopelessness of the situation.

At the same time, that brought up another question. The Elder suffering under the oppression this time was Mu Chen. But if Ke Cang Ju were to turn his eyes in their direction, they would obviously share the same fate.

By that time, must they be forced to swallow the oppression and be as helpless, falling prey to Ke Cang Ju’s tyranny without a word of protest?

NO!

That cannot happen!

Alarm spread among the other Elders and the bells rang loudly. The Elders who had managed to calm the disciples regarding the

previous incident started to feel the dangers looming.

Mu Chen's sorry plight relit the flame that threw chaos once again into the recently appeased few days of calm. The situation this time was more intense and spread greater fear into the people.

Qin Yue started to feel the heat and grew jittery. He sent people to the Hidden Cloud Peak to bring a message to "Ke Cang Ju", telling him to stop and desist with the atrocities, and not to stir up any more turmoil.

The person who impersonated Ke Cang Ju disregarded the warning, tossing it into the wind.

Within two days from then, high upon the gates leading into the various peaks, a pair of rotted corpses were hung. Those bodies, were the bodies of the very same disciples taken away from the respective peaks by "Ke Cang Ju" and brought back to the Hidden Cloud Peak.

In hours, the bubbling pot of chaos within the Qing Yun Clan blew up!

When the Elders saw the ravaged and gory bodies, their faces turned white!

"Ke Cang Ju, you bastard! I..... will not take this lying down!" The curses chorused throughout the various peaks at the same time!

Chapter 323: “Reeling In The Net (2)”

Within the Hidden Cloud Peak, Qiao Chu sat comfortably on the chair, his legs propped up nonchalantly. He looked at Jun Xie, who was stroking the little black cat's fur, his eyes sparkling in amusement. “Little Xie, that was just too wicked. You would actually return those bodies back to their peaks. Once their Elders see them, they will surely be hopping mad!”

Their disciples were forcibly taken from them, and in a just a few days, those disciples taken from them turned up dead and were thrown at the foot of their respective peaks. What made matters really intolerable was, the bodies each carried a letter from “Ke Cang Ju”.

In the letter, only a few simple words were written. ‘Your disciples have been rightfully returned. I’ll be back for more!’

Those few words were downright arrogant and its message utterly despicable. The other Elders could not possibly remain calm after that, as even Qiao Chu had almost wanted to bash Jun Xie up when he read the letter's contents!

That was just too much for anyone to take! The bodies of their disciples were already ravaged to such a pathetic state and Jun Xie had the cheek to claim they were “rightfully returned”, and he’ll be back!!? Those words might just kill the Elders where they stood when they read the letter!

“Those people deserve everything we did to them.” Jun Wu Xie said softly. Besides the Cloud Treading Peak, the whole of the Inner House of the Qing Yun Clan's disciples had been led to commit many atrocities under the rotted leadership from the top. The vanished villages, the missing villagers, were due to the actions of all those disciples. It was sickening to know from the boasts and revelations from the disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak that all the females in the villages had suffered unspeakable

horrors under the hands of the disciples as well while they carried out their mission, such was the cruelty of the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan.

Not many things could stir up joy or hatred in Jun Wu Xie in her past life, but one thing that she absolutely abhorred and despised, was the humiliation of the womenfolk.

Even when she was with the organisation, if any of their members were known to have committed such travesty, she would refuse to treat and save them even if the orders had come from the very top. She would just watch coldly as those people suffer in agony as they fell victim to the inescapable death that would come without her treatment.

The knowledge of it, only steeled Jun Wu Xie's resolve further.

If the Heavens could not deliver the punishment due, she would gladly lend a hand!

“Heh heh, I am guessing, the time is nearing, that those Elders will go charging to the Sovereign and kick up a big fuss. And at that time, it will be time for us to reel in our nets.” Qiao Chu said, rubbing his hands in glee. It was both thrilling and exciting to be carrying out Jun Xie's ploys. It was hard to imagine that the petite youth before them, who rarely spoke much, would be so meticulous and efficient when carrying out missions like this.

He would really love to open up Jun Xie's head, and see what's really inside.

“Have the items been placed and set up?” Hua Yao asked from one side. He wasn't as unconcerned as Qiao Chu was. He knew the severity of the situation. If they failed to wipe out the enemy in one go, they would in turn be the ones who would die here.

“I had it all set up much earlier. Any task that Little Xie hands down to me, would be carried out to the letter.” Qiao Chu guffawed, thumping his chest confidently.

“Within three days, the Elders will make their move. Get Mu Chen prepared. I do not want any untoward incidents.” Jun Wu Xie said as she raised her head. After almost a month’s preparation, it was time to pull in the net.

She would make the Qing Yun Clan, pay for all their sins.

After being away for so long, she felt a tinge of homesickness.

Grandfather, Uncle..... Jun Wu Yao.....

It was time to go home.

When the things here are all settled, she would make a trip back to the Lin Palace, before she would leave again to cultivate the elixir that Qiao Chu and Hua Yao wanted.

“Alright. I’ll go to the Cloud Treading Peak tonight. I do not dare to step in there in the day as the disciples of the Cloud Treading Peak are currently dead against having any Hidden Cloud Peak disciples step into their territory.” Qiao Chu explained, scratching his head. Jun Xie’s and Mu Chen’s alliance was known only to the four of them. The disciples of the Cloud Treading Peak still thought that their Elder had suffered injustice in the Hidden Cloud Peak, and when they saw any Hidden Cloud Peak disciples, their faces turn to rage and they pounced on the Hidden Cloud Peak disciples without hesitation!

Chapter 324: “Reeling In The Net (3)”

What frustrated Qiao Chu further was that if the disciples from the Cloud Treading Peak had attacked him, he could not retaliate! As Mu Chen’s protective nature over his disciples would bring Mu Chen come asking for his head!

All the pieces were already set in place. They only had to wait for the storm to hit.

The moment finally arrived. Two days later, the edgy Elders could not contain themselves any further and had grouped and gathered themselves together to go up the Blue Cloud Peak, to fight for the injustice done upon their disciples.

They had been slapped across their faces and if they continued to swallow their pride and did not react, they would lose their positions as Elders in the eyes of their disciples of the various peaks.

All the other Elders moved together, and even the not fully recovered Mu Chen was dragged along. The lone exclusion was their target “Ke Cang Ju”.

Qin Yue was sitting in the main hall of the Blue Cloud Peak, and a splitting headache wrecked at him.

He had eleven Elders under him, and except for the recently deceased Jiang Chen Qing and the culprit, Ke Cang Ju, who was wholly responsible for giving him this headache, all of them were presently here right before him!

The nine Elders sat on two sides of the hall, all their faces dark and gloomy.

Cai Zhuo, who was the oldest among them, and who commanded the highest respect, was the first to speak, his face face and he stood up unsteadily.

“My Sovereign, what is Ke Cang Ju up to? He claimed to be

acting under your orders to loan a few disciples from the respective peaks to bring back to the Hidden Cloud Peak. We reluctantly agreed as it was after all your idea. But, what did he do after that!? The disciples that he had brought back with him have now turned up dead! Their badly ravaged bodies were even disposed of right before the gates of the various peaks!”

Cai Zhuo sighed heavily and his voice sounded all choked up as he said: “Those disciples were lovingly and painstakingly nurtured by our own hands! But they had been turned into specimens of inhumane torture so cruelly by Ke Cang Ju! Those bodies which had belonged to our beloved and dearly missed disciples were then carelessly thrown before our gates and they were so badly ravaged that not a single one of them was whole! Those were disciples carefully picked and rightfully admitted into the Qing Yun Clan! How could they be allowed to fall prey to cold blooded murder like this, and at the hands of an Elder of our very own Qing Yun Clan yet! Would this incident not chill the loyal hearts of our innocent disciples? What drove the final nail into the already bleeding hearts of our disciples? The audacity that Ke Cang Ju actually left a letter on those poor cold lifeless bodies disposed stating that our disciples had been rightfully returned, and he’ll be back again! Sovereign! How could such treachery and atrocities be allowed to happen within our sanctimonious Cloudy Peaks under your glorious leadership!?”

Qin Yue held his head in his hands, his temples were being hammered. Never in his wildest dreams would he imagine that Ke Cang Ju would carry things this far.

It was no wonder the other Elders could gather themselves and stood together on this. The actions of Ke Cang Ju’s were intolerable even in Qin Yue’s mind.

Qin Yue knew Ke Cang Ju would kill those disciples. But killing them off and disposing the bodies right before the other Elders was too much and a big slap across their faces!

When Ke Cang Ju had merely taken the disciples, he was able to persuade and gradually appease the Elders that those disciples were in the Hidden Cloud Peak just to provide some assistance and would not be in any danger. Even if they were to die in the end, as long as the bodies cannot be found, they would not have any proof of the murder.

But Ke Cang Ju had done it this time!

He must have felt that life in the Qing Yun Clan was too peaceful!

He actually dared go up to each Elder and slap them across their faces!

This time, even Qin Yue did not know how to shield Ke Cang Ju. The situation before him was getting beyond his control as all the Elders were obviously burning up in rage. Their egos and standings in the Qing Yun Clan have been pricked and challenged and they would not back down so easily this time!

“In regards to this matter, I will ensure you men will get a satisfactory answer. Go! Fetch me Elder Ke!” Qin Yue realised that if he continued to shield Ke Cang Ju further on this matter, the other Elders would begin to hold thoughts of rebellion in their hearts. He would just summon Ke Cang Ju here, and let him answer for his own actions, himself!

After a while, the disciples who were sent to the Hidden Cloud Peak brought Ke Cang Ju.

And following behind Ke Cang Ju himself, were two young disciples. The three figures stood defiantly just outside the Qing Yun Clan's main hall!

Chapter 325: “Storm Clouds Loom (1)”

Without any signs of guilt or fear, “Ke Cang Ju” brought his disciples and appeared before the main hall.

One glance at them was all it took to make the other Elders almost jump up in anger. If it was not for Qin Yue’s presence, they might have all charged at Ke Cang Ju and skinned him alive.

“Elder Ke, there is something we need to discuss today. Dismiss your disciples from here.” Qin Yue said, after clearing his throat. He thought that Ke Cang Ju was getting more and more overboard with his actions. Why would he bring disciples to a meeting between the Sovereign and the Elders?

“Ke Cang Ju” replied offhandedly: “There is nothing they cannot hear, and since the Sovereign asked for my presence, here I am. As to whether I bring my disciples, that should not bother our Sovereign.”

With his arrogant reply, the faces of the other Elders turned a shade of purple and even Qin Yue was visibly angered.

“Ke Cang Ju” had brushed off Qin Yue’s command before everyone and his tone had been highly arrogant, showing total disregard for Qin Yue’s position and authority.

Qin Yue’s face grew dark and if not for the evidence of wrongdoing held in “Ke Cang Ju’s” hands, Qin Yue would have exploded there and then.

Qin Yue was forced to hold his anger down and proceed as though nothing is wrong.

“Elder Ke, do you know why I have summoned you here today?” Qin Yue made an effort to speak in an even tone.

“I know.” Hua Yao replied as he waved his hand dismissively and brought Jun Xie and Qiao Chu in while he sat down on a seat on one side, ignoring the fiery stares that the other Elders were

throwing at him.

“If you know what this is all about, should you not give an answer to the accusations thrown at you today?” Qin Yue asked carefully. The chaos that rocked the Qin Yun Clan recently reached a level never seen before. Not only the Elders, but even the disciples of the Inner House were fearful and anxious. Qin Yue had not expected things to reach such a level of unease and if he had known, he would not have agreed to Ke Cang Ju request.

But it was too late to renege.

“Answer? What answer?” Hua Yao asked frowning. His stance defiant and conceited.

The corner of Qin Yue’s mouth twitched, and the faces of the other Elders were angry and filled with hatred.

Cai Zhuo could not hold back and said: “Ke Cang Ju, as the saying goes, our actions must never go past the line, and when we meet we’ll still get along fine! But you killed the disciples taken from our various peaks, you will not leave without giving us a satisfactory reply today!”

Hua Yao stared at the aggressive Cai Zhuo and smirked. He raised his hand and pointed at Jun Xie who was sitting beside him and said to the rest: “You need me to answer for such a small matter? My disciple here will let you know what I have to say about it.” He laid back onto the chair after that, seemingly refusing to say anymore.

That infuriated the other Elders!

They came here to settle scores with “Ke Cang Ju”, but he simply pushed his disciple to the front to answer for him. What did that mean? His disinterest and nonchalant attitude was the absolute worst!

Pushing a mere disciple forward to speak to the various Elders? What a joke! That was just pure disrespect! How could a lowly

disciple answer or even discuss on an even level with the Elders!?

Jun Wu Xie was pushed into the limelight as she sat within the main hall, facing the unfriendly stares from all directions. She was nevertheless decidedly calm and her clear cold voice rang out within the hall.

“The various Elders want an answer, and an answer is what I would give. Elder Ke had acted under orders and every action he took was approved by the Sovereign. Moreover, Elder Ke’s actions were not for his own benefit, but was for the revenge of the Eldest Miss and Elder Jiang.” Jun Wu Xie said slowly.

Qin Yue who sat grandly behind the seat of power grew more and more shocked as Jun Wu Xie spoke. His eyes stared in disbelief at the small figure who was seated beside “Ke Cang Ju”, who had spoken with a straight face, frankly and clearly.

That kid! Did he know what he was saying!?

Chapter 326: “Storm Clouds Loom (2)”

Qin Yue would never have expected that a lowly disciple from the Hidden Cloud Peak would dare reveal the secret deal he had made with “Ke Cang Ju” to the masses so easily! He must be tired of living!

Qin Yue panicked. If Jun Xie was allowed to prattle on, things were bound to get ugly. But Jun Xie did not give Qin Yue any opportunity to interrupt and continued quickly: “The Sovereign had said, he wanted revenge for the Eldest Miss and Elder Jiang, and wanted Elder Ke to develop a new poison. Those disciples that we took were sacrificed to develop that new poison. It was just a few disciples, the Eldest Miss’ and Elder Jiang’s revenge would take precedence.”

Jun Wu Xie’s words rang loud and clear in the ears of the Elders seated in the hall. She spoke without pausing, and the speed was neither too fast nor too slow, ensuring that every single word was clearly heard.

Qin Yue’s face had turned bright red.

The expressions of the Elders turned to ones of shock as they stared unbelievably at Qin Yue, their eyes aflame.

The news of the demise of their Eldest Miss and Elder Jiang had reached the other Elders a month ago. They had thought that the doting father, Qin Yue, would have deployed the forces in revenge immediately but even after waiting for a month, there had been no action taken, and they had still thought that Qin Yue had totally changed.

But Jun Wu Xie’s revelation had made them realise that Qin Yue had not intended to spare the murderers, but was planning to make his vengeance more thorough and complete!

Qin Yue’s thirst for revenge should not have concerned the other

peaks, but who would have thought that Qin Yue would be so blinded by his desire for vengeance that he would disregard their interests and allow “Ke Cang Ju” to brandish the Sovereign’s name and come humiliating the other Elders of the various peaks!?

Even if they had needed sacrifices to experiment the new poison, they could have easily used the disciples from the Outer House. Why did they insist on picking on their own disciples? It was clear that Qin Yue knew from the start what “Ke Cang Ju” was doing and he had indulged his malicious intentions. He claimed to be doing it for the revenge of Qin Yu Yan and Jiang Chen Qing, but his real intentions must have been only for Qin Yu Yan alone and Jiang Chen Qing was just a convenient excuse!

As the Sovereign, he acted only for his self interest and killed disciples of the clan. He had even disregarded the dignity and reputation of the Elders and allowed them to be freely trampled all over. That was most unbecoming of a leader!

The looks thrown at the Sovereign by the Elders were all filled with discontent, and were tinged with rage.

“What a brazen little kid! Stop with those lies! As the Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan, how could I allow myself to commit such atrocities which are by all standards beyond reason!?” Qin Yue was pale and he wanted nothing more than to throttle the little kid before him.

He might have consented to “Ke Cang Ju’s” insidious request, but that was done in secret. If the Elders were to affirm that fact, that would be disastrous for him!

Qin Yue had always shielded Ke Cang Ju but he had done that discreetly all this time as well, and had put up a front of being fair and just, practicing impartiality.

He knew clearly, that certain deals sealed, cannot be allowed to be brought out into the open.

He had summoned “Ke Cang Ju” here today as he had thought “Ke Cang Ju” might be arrogant, but he was never dumb. To appease the situation, “Ke Cang Ju” would just have needed to perfunctorily apologise to the other Elders and with a few more words from the Sovereign himself, he would be able to diffuse the tension.

But who would have known exactly what had gotten into “Ke Cang Ju” today. “Ke Cang Ju” had brazenly not shown any remorse or guilt for his actions, and had instead shown utter contempt by shoving a mere disciple whose loose lips readily revealed every single detail of the secret deal made between just the two of them!

When did “Ke Cang Ju” become so dense!? Did he not realise the consequences!?

“Guards! Drag this liar spouting all these nonsense out of here!” Qin Yue did not want to hear another single word coming out from Jun Wu Xie, as that would only worsen the situation he faced at the moment.

Chapter 327: “Storm Clouds Loom (3)”

Several Blue Cloud Peak disciples rushed immediately, but before they could even touch an edge of Jun Wu Xie’s clothes, Qiao Chu met them head on in a flash and jumped into their midst. A mighty sweep of his long legs sent them all flying into the air just as they had entered!

Qiao Chu’s ferocious attack sent the people in the hall into a frenzy!

Both of the disciples that “Ke Cang Ju” brought were both rather bold and they had created quite a stir!

One had revealed before everyone present of the secrets shared between Qin Yue and “Ke Cang Ju” without flinching and the other had just attacked disciples of the Blue Cloud Peak and the blow had thrown the disciples out of the hall!

Fighting in the Sovereign’s hall, Qiao Chu was undoubtedly the first one to dare do it!

At that moment, Qin Yue blew his top! He stood up angrily and his finger was trembling as he pointed it at “Ke Cang Ju” and shouted: “Ke Cang Ju! What is the meaning of those two scoundrels!? Do you still have any respect for me as the Sovereign!?”

A revolt!

He has revolted!

Ke Cang Ju might have been arrogant all this time, but he had always still maintained a certain degree of respect for Qin Yue and knew where to draw the line. But now, “Ke Cang Ju” had brought two of his disciples who had challenged his authority squarely, and Qin Yue could not hold his anger down anymore!

All Qin Yue wanted to do at that moment was to strangle “Ke Cang Ju” to death!

“Ke Cang Ju” was sitting calmly at the side, looking at the fuming Qin Yue. He then said dismissively: “My Sovereign, your anger is really uncalled for. It’s just a few disciples that were blasted out of here. You were rather generous with the disciples of the other peaks before, so just injuring a few of the Blue Cloud Peak disciples isn’t much. Moreover, as per your instructions, your own disciples were spared from the testing of the poison and had only suffered from a kick now, it’s not that big a deal is it?” If “Ke Cang Ju” had not spoken, the other Elders might not have been further inflamed, but those words told of Qin Yue’s selfish and self centered mentality towards his own disciples.

You wanted revenge for your daughter, and needed to sacrifice the disciples of the Qing Yun Clan. You then targeted our disciples from the various peaks but left your own disciples safely out of harm’s way.

The disciples of the various peaks were killed, their bodies ravaged, and Qin Yue wasn’t much affected. The disciples of the Blue Cloud Peak got kicked once, and he jumps up in rage. Where was the impartiality?

The Elders of the Qing Yun Clan knew more or less of Qin Yue’s personality. They knew he was a hypocrite through and through and “Ke Cang Ju’s” flaming words only made the Elders’ eyes widen in astonishment.

So Qin Yue’s indulgence of Ke Cang Ju’s actions were not only for the revenge of Qin Yu Yan but to use that as an excuse to undermine the positions of the Elders?

That thought sprouted in the minds of the various Elders and their dissatisfaction against Qin Yue suddenly grew to doubt and they became wary.

Qin Yue’s face paled, and he stared at “Ke Cang Ju” thinking that “Ke Cang Ju” must have lost his mind! His words were about to make the whole situation blow up!

Gritting his teeth, Qin Yue still did not dare force “Ke Cang Ju” into a corner as “Ke Cang Ju” still held evidence that could bring him down from his seat of power.

Qin Yue had never been in such an uncomfortable position. The same Ke Cang Ju who had helped him usurp the position of the Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan before had today turned out to pose as his most hated but untouchable threat to him!

Taking a deep breath, Qin Yue pushed down the fury within, his eyes red from the effort, he finally said: “Elder Ke, your two disciples were disrespectful before the Sovereign. According to the rules of the Qing Yun Clan, they must be punished.”

If he could not touch Ke Cang Ju, he would kill his disciples to appease his anger! Just to hit back at Ke Cang Ju.

“Ke Cang Ju” raised an eyebrow and looked at the quietly seated Jun Xie, and his mouth curled into a smile.

“Sovereign Qin, are you sure you want to carry that out?” It seemed that Qin Yue could not hold himself back anymore.

Chapter 328: “Storm Clouds Loom (4)”

Qin Yue frowned, a chill showing in his eyes.

“Of course.”

The incident today would need blood to be spilled to suppress it. Jun Wu Xie’s words had made the secret between Qin Yue and Ke Cang Ju an open book for all to see. If Qin Yue did not do anything to show his authority, the other Elders might see it as weakness and exploit the fiery situation.

Only if the two Hidden Cloud Peak disciples paid in blood, would he be able to calm the chaos before him.

Firstly, it would show that Qin Yue did not show Ke Cang Ju any special favours or indemnity, and even the disciples of the Hidden Cloud Peak, who were under the protection of Ke Cang Ju, would be killed when wrongdoing was committed. There had been the deaths of disciples from the various peaks in this incident and killing the two Hidden Cloud Peak disciples would appease the other Elders’ rage to a certain degree.

Secondly.....

Those two scoundrels..... One had a big mouth, and the other attacked his disciples. That had greatly challenged his dignity as the Sovereign and if he did not kill them, his position as the Sovereign would be greatly undermined today.

And there could be a third.....

Qin Yue narrowed his eyes as he stared at Ke Cang Ju.

Thirdly, it was to knock some sense into this overly arrogant and overbearing Ke Cang Ju!

The few Blue Cloud Peak disciples got to their feet, their eyes tinged with fear as they looked at Qiao Chu. Qin Yue had already given his orders, and that had meant that Jun Wu Xie’s and Qiao

Chu's were to be rid.

But the disciples had been taken down with a single swipe of Qiao Chu's kick, and they were now gripped in fear.

The disciples wanted to arrest those two youths, but.....

Those two were just too strong for them!

"Why are all of you still standing there! Get rid of the two of them right now!" Qin Yue shouted.

The several Blue Cloud Peak disciples looked at each other, grieving at their own helplessness.

They struggled for a long while, before they carefully took a step towards Qiao Chu.

However.....

In a blink of an eye, those Blue Cloud Peak disciples were soundly thrashed by Qiao Chu and thrown out of the main hall. The disciples lay scattered on the ground outside unmoving, all of them seemingly unconscious!

The disciples of the Qing Yun Clan were more inclined towards the practice of Medicine and were not highly skilled in their spiritual powers. The Qing Yun Clan invited many strong expert exponents to serve as resident mercenaries to make up for that lack. The disciples' weak combat prowess were just pathetic before Qiao Chu's pair of fists.

After ridding himself of the weak and pesky disciples, Qiao Chu swept off the dust on his palms, and a smirk hung on his face.

Qin Yue's face was thunderously dark. He had not expected Ke Cang Ju's disciple to possess such strength. A group of his Blue Cloud Peak disciples were thrown out of the hall and knocked out in mere moments.

"Ke Cang Ju!! Would you not rein your disciples in!?" Qin Yue screamed.

“Ke Cang Ju” stood up slowly and replied: “My Sovereign, you were the one who wanted me to develop the poison, and you were the one who agreed to use the disciples of the other peaks to experiment the poison on, but now, you want to use my disciples’ life to appease the outrage from the other peaks instead. I cannot find it within myself to agree to it.”

Qin Yue eyes bulged, staring at “Ke Cang Ju” unbelievably. He could not believe what he was hearing! “Ke Cang Ju” was pushing all the blame onto him!

“Ke Cang Ju” turned to the other Elders and said: “Seek your justice from the head, the Qing Yun Clan is led by our Sovereign and he calls the shots. If he did not agree, how would I be able to touch your disciples? Qin Yue was the one who gave me the orders, but now he wants me to shoulder the blame. I am unwilling and unable to shoulder such a big responsibility.”

Qin Yue was visibly trembling in rage by now and the Elders were absolutely furious.

“Ke Cang Ju” was incorrigible, but his words made absolute sense. If he had not gotten Qin Yue’s approval, he would not have been able to touch the disciples from the various peaks!

All this tragedy had started from Qin Yue and was possible only with his approval!

The dissatisfaction from the other Elders for Qin Yue had only been due to the favouritism and indulgence shown to Ke Cang Ju, but this day, it had ballooned to unseen before proportions!

Chapter 329: “Sixth Slap (1)”

Mu Chen, who had stayed silent all this while exchanged a glance with Jun Wu Xie without anyone noticing. Mu Chen stood up and said: “My Sovereign, may I ask if we, the Elders of the various peaks acted inappropriately to make you raise your guard against us. If your intention is to diminish the powers and authority of the Elders, you would only need to issue a command and there was no need for such underhanded methods. You are the Sovereign and your word is law. Your word alone is enough to make the Elders disappear.”

Mu Chen’s words struck a chord deep within the hearts of the Elders. His words reminded the Elders and reprimanded Qin Yue of his duplicity in this incident that brought about the deaths of their disciples.

Qin Yue’s head turned to face another adversary, all bent on bringing about his downfall.

The other Elders were poked into action and they opened their mouths in chorus, throwing words of admonishment and reprimand at Qin Yue.

Who was Qin Yue? How the leadership of the Qing Yun Clan fell into his hands was not clear, but the various Elders had a very good guess at what had actually happened.

A man who lusted for power so badly, that he murdered his own Teacher. Such a man was definitely capable of making moves against his own Elders, to diminish their authority.

In moments, the main hall of the Qing Yun Clan exploded in anger as all the other Elders pointed their fingers at Qin Yue!

Qin Yue suddenly became their common enemy.

Jun Wu Xie eyed the spectacle before her and her eyes chilled.

Under the beration from all the Elders, Qin Yue burst out, and

shouted at the silently observing “Ke Cang Ju”: “Ke Cang Ju! As an Elder of the Hidden Cloud Peak, you instigated the other Elders against me! What is your real underlying motive!?”

Qin Yue was going mad, he knew “Ke Cang Ju” was not dumb enough to watch him go down in flames. He should know what he should do! Ke Cang Ju should know that if Qin Yue were not able to protect his position as the Sovereign through this, neither Ke Cang Ju would be let off easy by the other Elders.

The other Elders would come down just as hard on him!

“Ke Cang Ju” stood up slowly, and looked calmly at the fuming Qin Yue before he said: “I have no hidden motives, but was just stating facts.”

Qin Yue clenched his jaw and said: “What facts!? Why are you going against me!? Why!!?”

“Ke Cang Ju” smiled but did not reply, and Jun Wu Xie stood up at that moment, her chilling eyes fixed on Qin Yue, and she calmly retorted.

“Because, he is not the Elder of the Hidden Cloud Peak.”

“What!?” Qin Yue froze as he stared incredulously at the petite figure before him.

“Hua Yao, let the Sovereign see you as who you really are.” Jun Wu Xie smiled, the symphony of calamity was about to start, playing throughout the peaks of the Qing Yun Clan!

As Jun Wu Xie’s words were heard by the ears of the people present, their eyes witnessed an incredible sight!

They saw the badly bowed back of the hunched up “Ke Cang Ju” start to straighten, the short stature started to grow, the hideous countenance shifted and the features on his face started to change to become chiseled and sharp, turning beautiful as the moments went by.

Hua Yao shrugged off the dark cloak on him, and his tall frame was clothed in light purple clothes.

Moments later, the hideous middle aged hunchback had transformed before the eyes of the people in the hall into a eye popping beautiful youth!

A heavy silence suddenly hung within the spacious main hall, and all eyes were fixed on the unfamiliar beautiful youth suddenly standing right before them!

The transformation that had happened before their eyes was incredulous and totally unheard of!

“You..... you are not Ke Cang Ju!” His face was deathly pale, as Qin Yue pointed a shaking finger at Hua Yao.

“He never was.” Jun Wu Xie laughed lightly. The laugh lit up Jun Wu Xie’s delicate featured face in a way that somehow made her dazzle at that moment.

Chapter 330: “Sixth Slap (2)”

“Who are you!” Qin Yue’s anger turned to fear, Ke Cang Ju had been unknowingly disposed of and was currently impersonated by someone else! When did all this start? Since when had the Ke Cang Ju he had been seeing all this while been swapped with this youth before him!

Moreover, he had not noticed anything different before this!

Not knowing what was happening made him start to lose his grip on the situation and his fear rose further.

“We are here to claim your life!” Jun Wu Xie stared at Qin Yue, observing his expression of fear on his face.

The top clan across the lands, the Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan, with his face contorted in fear, was a sight that was very rarely seen.

And she firmly believed, that that expression of fear would remain plastered on his face till his moment of death!

“What audacity! All this time, it was you impersonating Ke Cang Ju!? You were the one wholly responsible for killing the disciples from the other peaks!” Qin Yue spoke through gritted teeth, and in his fear, a glimmer of hope started to shine within his heart!

If Ke Cang Ju had actually been this youth all this while, he would be able to push all the blame to that youth and divert the Elders’ hatred and anger to him!

“I suggested it.” Jun Wu Xie said to Qin Yue, a smile on her face.

“How wicked and vicious of you! You dare incite hatred between the Sovereign and his Elders!? My Elders, you heard him, all this turmoil was stirred up by these culprits! They plotted to divide the powers that be in the Qing Yun Clan and carry out their insidious secret plot!” Qin Yue grasped desperately at this last glimmer of hope and tried to heap all the blame for the accusations onto the

youth!

As expected, with Hua Yao's identity glaringly exposed, the Elders started to recover from their stupor. It had happened too suddenly and the events that had unfolded were both shocking and unbelievable. The hatred towards Qin Yue was gradually diverted to the unknown enemy.

The Elders were conscious of the fact that at times like this, it called for them to unite against an external threat!

"I had thought that our Elder Ke would never commit such vicious atrocities! So you are the culprits! Speak the truth now, what have you done with Elder Ke!?" Qin Yue saw that the Elders' anger had subsided somewhat and he aggressively pushed to divert their anger fully.

No matter who these youths were, they would not leave the Blue Cloud Peak alive!

Qin Yue laughed in his heart, thinking that the three youths were still inexperienced. If they had not exposed themselves, and used Ke Cang Ju's identity to incite the Elders' anger, he would have suffered greatly under the Elders' combined rage.

But just as things were getting too hot to handle, those idiots had revealed themselves and shocked the Elders, and their rage had subsided completely!

Qin Yue almost laughed out loud. Even Heaven was on his side!

Jun Wu Xie saw Qin Yue's suppressed glee and her smile grew wider. "Ke Cang Ju? You'll get to meet him soon – In the depths of hell."

Qin Yue froze. "You killed him?" His eyes were wide in consternation.

Qin Yue knew Ke Cang Ju's abilities very well, and even a highly skilled blue spirit expert might not be his match. He might not have possessed spiritual powers, but his proficiency with poison

was nothing to sneeze at!

Three mere young youths would not be able to kill an such a highly proficient poison user that easily.

“Yes.” Jun Wu Xie answered honestly.

Qin Yue narrowed his eyes in anger and said: “You dare murder an Elder of the Qing Yun Clan and kill our disciples! You even have the audacity to incite hatred between the Elders and me, trying to cleave a wedge in our ranks! None of you can hope to leave here alive today!”

Chapter 331: “Sixth Slap (3)”

Jun Wu Xie said with smile: “Don’t worry, not everyone in the Qing Yun Clan will die, and we have no intentions of leaving yet.”

Qin Yue stared at Jun Wu Xie, unable to believe that a young ordinary looking petite youth dared speak so arrogantly to him!

He had said that not all the people in the Qing Yun Clan will perish, and they were not above to flee!

Was the petite youth telling him that he intended to annihilate the Qing Yun Clan!?

“You are getting too far ahead of yourself! Obliterate the Qing Yun Clan? You think yourself capable of such a feat!?” Qin Yue laughed coldly.

All the Elders had stood up at Jun Wu Xie’s provocative words. No matter how chaotic things were among the leaders within the Qing Yun Clan, when faced with an external enemy, they knew to group together to take the opponent down.

“You brat. You’ll see that you would have to eat those words of yours. Just the three of you and you want to annihilate the whole of Qing Yun Clan? What a joke!” Cai Zhuo sneered as he looked at the young trio before them. After the initial shock revelations, he had had enough time to calm himself.

In the eyes of the Elders, they acknowledged that they had some good abilities if they were able to kill Ke Cang Ju. But they had dared to toy with the leadership of the mighty Qing Yun Clan and the proud and egotistical Elders did not take well to the idea that they had been played as pawns in the youths’ plot.

“Whether the joke’s on you or on me remains to be seen.” Jun Wu Xie said softly.

“Oh! That I would like to find out. Show me what you’ve got to back up those arrogant words of yours!” Qin Yue’s worries

dissipated at that moment and his rage took over. If not for these three youths, he would not have needed to suffer the torment of doubt and distrust, nearly driving his position of leadership into a precarious situation, and chaos would not have swept through the Qing Yun Clan, and the Elders would not have turned against him collectively!

Qin Yue gave a mighty shout and many disciples who were standing guard outside rushed into the hall. More than a hundred disciples surrounded Jun Wu Xie, Qiao Chu and Hua Yao, cutting off any routes of escape.

“No matter how skilled you think yourself to be, do not even think of escaping from here alive!” Qin Yue eyes flashed cruelly.

Jun Wu Xie eyed the Blue Cloud Peak disciples around them, and the ends of her mouth curled deeper.

“Escape? There’s no need for that.”

“All disciples hear my order! Arrest the three of them at once!” Qin Yue hollered.

At that moment, all the Blue Cloud Peak disciples jumped at the surrounded trio!

At the same time that the disciples pounced, two streaks blurred and exploded within the crowd!

A humongous two headed bone snake slithered lightning fast right in the middle of all the action. The two headed bone snake had no flesh on his body but only bones that shone glaringly white. A pair of blood red eyes on each of its head stared venomously at the disciples, and each of its head was as big as a full grown adult male! The two headed bone snake swung its tail at the crowd of disciples and its serrated bones cut all in the tail’s path, as sharp as finely honed blades! Blood flowed and flesh tore!

On the other side, an immense lumbering bear gave out a ear splitting roar. Its starkly separated black and white fur posed a

striking figure. At over two meters tall, a single swipe of its paw made mincemeat out of a huge chunk of the disciples!

The sudden appearance of two massive beast ring spirits made the disciples of the Blue Cloud Peak who surrounded the trio howl in terror and many were too flustered and they clumsily tried to summon their own ring spirits. A pity those ring spirits were pathetic in terms of size or attack power, and they did not even pose a threat to the two huge beasts before them!

Qin Yue stared wide eyed, unable to look away from the two rampaging beast ring spirits sweeping across the main hall. He had seen much of the world at large, but he had never seen anything close to those two ring spirits! Those two ring spirits would overpower even the ring spirits of the various resident expert exponents' ring spirits!

“Hurry! Bring the invited resident experts here!” Qin Yue was sweating profusely. Who would have expected that three young unknown youths, would possess such formidable and powerful ring spirits!? If they were allowed to go on, there wouldn't be enough disciples in the Qing Yun Clan for them to kill!

Chapter 332: “Sixth Slap (4)”

One of the Elder’s face had turned all aghast at the bloody scene before his eyes and he could only watch on in horror. Upon hearing Qin Yue’s shout, he snapped back to his senses and moved to run out from there to call for help.

However, before he could step out through the door of the main hall, a massive black shadow loomed and knocked him back inside!

The massive black beast stood blocking the exit with its body, with its head hung low as it growled. The beast opened its jaws, revealing sharp pointed fangs! The Elder who had almost been knocked unconscious from the blow looked up towards the door. When he saw the black beast, he suddenly lost all strength in his legs.

Blood sprayed within the main hall and the Blue Cloud Peak disciples were falling one after another. Under the assault of the two humongous beasts, the three youths stood untouched in the middle, watching calmly as the the bodies of the fallen started to pile up.

Jun Wu Xie stood in the eye of the storm and observed the deathly pale Qin Yue. She watched him silently and the ice in her eyes intensified.

Qin Yue felt the chill run up through his body when he saw those icily frosty eyes.

He could not for his life remember when he had offended these angels of death. They were obviously still so very young, but their ring spirits had grown so powerful!

Watching them, even the highly skilled Qin Yue did not dare step into the battle.

He had seen their capabilities and he knew in his heart that he was still no match for the three ring spirit beasts killing his

disciples!

The fear in Qin Yue rose again, and terror gripped him as he felt the closing approach of death looming over his head.

He could see it in his mind, all his disciples slaughtered, and their blood covered every square inch of the floor in the main hall. Their bodies piled up high, surrounding the only clean white marble visible under the three youths' feet.

The catastrophic battle before him would not bring a scratch on the trio standing in the middle.

Qin Yue and the Elders were all held in terror, they had always been revered and held in great esteem by all the people throughout the lands. They never would have thought that three mere kids could make them taste this fear, a bitter taste in their mouths.

Haughtiness, dignity, did not matter to them at that moment as they had been shattered to bits. Their usual upturned noses and complacent attitude were gone and they stood trembling, unable to move a muscle, wishing in futility that this was all just a bad dream.

“Who is the one that needs to escape now?” Jun Wu Xie beamed at Qin Yue and the Elders who were huddled closely together.

Only one Elder within the hall was still calmly seated. His eyes met Jun Wu Xie's and he stood, walking slowly to stand with the three youths.

“What is Mu Chen doing?” Cai Zhuo asked, hiding behind another Elder, as he peeked out to see Mu Chen walking towards Jun Wu Xie.

Qin Yue's eyes were fixed on Mu Chen back.

“You are better than I thought you were. It is my honour to have worked together with you.” Mu Chen stepped through the pools of blood on the floor and stood before Jun Wu Xie, his face beaming with the first smile that came truly from his heart in more than a

decade.

“It isn’t over.” Jun Wu Xie smiled back.

Qin Yue could not take his ears off the conversation Mu Chen and Jun Wu Xie were having. He burned at Mu Chen’s treachery and his face turned red.

“Mu Chen! You are in cahoots with them!? You would destroy the Qing Yun Clan!? How could you? As an Elder of the Qing Yun Clan!!” Mu Chen was the last person he would have expected to turn against the Qing Yun Clan.

Mu Chen’s father had been the previous Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan and Mu Chen grew up within these Cloudy Peaks. His love and passion for the Qing Yun Clan was way beyond what anyone else here held.

Chapter 333: “Sixth Slap (5)”

It was the very same person who had devoted his whole life to the betterment of the Qing Yun Clan that had actually been in cahoots with outsiders to bring total annihilation to the mighty Qing Yun Clan!

That was just unbelievable to the Sovereign and other Elders!

In reply to Qin Yue’s desperate shouts, Mu Chen merely turned slowly to face him, and his voice sounded almost disgusted when he said softly: “This place is no longer the same Qing Yun Clan I knew and treasured, if the Qing Yun Clan is to exist in its current state, I would much rather choose for it to completely cease to exist altogether.”

The clan’s past sacrimonious sanctity had been viciously tarred and blemished by the rot and filth that had taken root and had been prevalent in many recent years, it should just be exterminated altogether!

Qin Yue stared at Mu Chen in unbridled rage. He could not fathom and pinpoint exactly when Mu Chen had started his alliance with the three youths. Mu Chen had been badly poisoned all this while, so how had he joined up with them?

The series of questions swirled in Qin Yue’s mind confusingly and soon, the answer came to him suddenly.

When Mu Chen had been bedridden with poison, it had only been a ploy to gain the sympathy of the other Elders! Mu Chen did not speak much, but every single word stoked the fire burning within Qin Yue!

“Did you think that if you kill me and the Elders here, you would be able to still walk out of the Qing Yun Clan alive!? Let me tell you, stop dreaming! The multitude of disciples within the twelve peaks would not allow you to leave unscathed! The Cloudy Peaks

will be your final resting place!” In his rage and fear, Qin Yue screamed out in frustration and gave vent, trying to hide the fear within him.

Jun Wu Xie laughed, a series of melodious laughter poured out from Jun Wu Xie, sounding clearly within the hall. She shook her head wearily at Qin Yue’s empty threats as Qin Yue stood unmoving, his face showing a deathly pallor.

“Impossible! You will not succeed here today!” Qin Yue struggled to maintain his composure, but a nagging voice seemed to be telling him that the youth before him was entirely capable of what he claimed.”

Jun Wu Xie smiled as she produced a waxed pill in her hand.

“This pill here contains poison mist. Within an hour, when the sun reaches its peak, the heat will melt the coating of wax and the poison mist will spread. The slightest touch or inhalation will immediately claim the life of a person.”

Jun Wu Xie showed the poison pill before Qin Yue and the other Elders, and her smile grew more radiant. She had developed this poison mist by improving on the effects of Ke Cang Ju’s Lone Smoke. It was formless and was impossible to escape from, and only very highly skilled expert exponents beyond the indigo leveled spirit user would be able to suppress its lethal effects and hope to survive.

“Many of these pills have been placed throughout eleven of the peaks within the Qing Yun Clan. It will send all your beloved disciples on a straight route to hell.” Jun Wu Xie beamed as she said it, and her eyes flashed with murder.

“When..... did you plan all this.....” Qin Yue stared, eyes wide with fear, and he started shaking violently.

If everything she said was not a bluff..... The mighty Qing Yun Clan with its numerous disciples..... would be finished.....!

Jun Wu Xie replied nonchalantly: “After you agreed to allow Ke Cang Ju pick disciples from the various peaks.”

Qin Yue drew in a deep breath and his slumped in defeat!

All the various peaks had their own guards preventing unauthorised entry from outsiders. In order for those three youths to enter and plant the poison pills within the peaks, was supposed to be impossible to achieve undetected. But with the Sovereign’s own seal of approval and orders, it was made to become an easy task for them!

It finally dawned on Qin Yue at that moment. What the petite youth wanted was not to incite the various Elders against the Sovereign. What she wanted to achieve beneath it all, was to have the selection of the disciples of the various peaks to take up all of the Elders’ attention, allowing them free rein to plant those seeds within the various peaks unnoticed, to complete their plot to obliterate the whole Qing Yun Clan!

Chapter 334: “Sixth Slap (6)”

The plot was impossibly deep! And absolutely indefensible!

Qin Yue was left speechless and helpless. Three young youths had left the Sovereign of the mighty Qing Yun Clan completely defeated and the humiliation crushed Qin Yue's dignity to tiny little pieces.

The one fatal move that made it possible for them to plant all the seeds of destruction was allowed to be carried out by no one else but himself.

The other Elders' rage directed at him however strongly did not matter anymore. What frustrated him and made him feel like tearing his own hair out the most was his own stupidity and the reality hurt the most.

He had prided himself to be more intelligent than most people all his life, and one single mistake had cost him everything he held dear. He lost even his most prized Qing Yun Clan, to three young youths!

Within the hour, all would be lost and all the Qing Yun Clan's Inner House disciples would be dead. The only survivor would be Mu Chen and his Cloud Treading Peak. Rampaging with the main hall now, were three overpowering ring spirits, blocking all routes of escape for them.

In the end, when the Qing Yun Clan was left with a lone Mu Chen as an Elder, he would call the shots within the Qing Yun Clan, and would stand as the last and only witness to all that had happened here at the Blue Cloud Peak's summit. The truth would remain buried forever and the Qing Yun Clan would cease to exist henceforth.

Qin Yue could already feel the claws of death creeping into the Cloudy Peaks!

An Elder suddenly stood up, his face terror stricken.

“I hereby absolve myself completely of all ties from the Qing Yun Clan! I don’t want to be an Elder anymore! Spare me! I will not say anything against you!” The Elder pleaded pitifully as he fell down to his knees.

Power and authority did not matter anymore, not at the cost of one’s life. At the end of the road, all that did not mean anything anymore.

“Count me in!”

More of the Elders started to state their willingness to relinquish their positions of leadership and powers and retain their lives.

Qin Yue’s face darkened and his face started to twitch.

He raised a foot in anger and kicked out at the Elder who had first opened his mouth in plea and said angrily: “You think they will let you off just because you say you will have nothing more to do with the Qing Yun Clan? That’s being too naive! Did all your brains suddenly become addled? They will not stop till every single one of us are killed!”

Their other Elders turned to Jun Wu Xie with pleading eyes but all that they saw was the radiant smile on Jun Wu Xie, with dark vicious murder in her eyes.

At that moment, all their hopes were completely dashed, and the Elders could only wail and howl, lamenting at self perceived injustice in futility.

It was set in stone..... they were to die that day.

“That’s right, none of you can hope to leave this place alive. Enemies must be completely rooted out, I think all of you must at least understand that.” Jun Wu Xie’s words only reaffirmed that all hope was lost and the Elders fell into deadly silence.

Qin Yue stared hard at Jun Wu Xie, but unable to recall ever

seeing that face. Why was the petite youth so bent on killing him? And unwavering in his quest to annihilate all in the Qing Yun Clan?

“Who are you? What do you have against the Qing Yun Clan!? What made you so determined to exterminate the Qing Yun Clan!?”

Jun Wu Xie replied softly, but those words quaked Qin Yue violently. “Qi Kingdom, Jun Family.”

Qin Yue felt as though a bolt of lightning struck him. He could not speak, and a cold chill run through him.

“It’s you! You killed my daughter!” Qi Kingdom, Jun Family..... The murderers of Qin Yu Yan!

Jun Wu Xie shrugged, “The Qin Yun Clan did not allow me any other alternatives and I had to strike first. You have only yourself to blame for seeking your own doom.”

Jun Wu Xie had nothing against the Qing Yun Clan before. If the Qin Yun Clan had not pushed her into a corner, she wouldn’t have needed to leave home and come to this faraway mountains to plot their demise.

Everything that she did here was to protect her family from harm.

If only the Qing Yun Clan had not fallen into the hands of Qin Yue, the clan might not have turned to such oppression of the people throughout the lands, and all this would not have even begun.

Alas, they planted the seed of evil, and the poisonous fruit born from their own actions was about to be swallowed by their own selves.

Chapter 335: “Sixth Slap (7)”

Qin Yue fell back into his chair, his head abuzz.

Who would have thought, the mighty Qing Yun Clan famed throughout the lands, on one of its expeditions to the tiny Kingdom of Qi, come across the harbinger of death?

The sleepy inconspicuous kingdom, actually hid a demon capable of obliterating the whole Qing Yun Clan!

If he had known, Qin Yue would have given up on the Soul Jade, and wished he had never met Jun Xie!

But, it was too late for regrets and there was no way he could turn things around.

“Hua Yao, you have less than an hour.” Jun Wu Xie turned to look at the beautiful youth standing beside her. Qin Yue’s and the Qing Yun Clan’s upcoming demise had become a fact that would not change, but she had not forgotten her deal with Hua Yao and Qiao Chu.

Hua Yao nodded and with a wave of his hand, the double headed bone snake slid speedily to charge at Qin Yue. The Elders who were cowering close to the Sovereign screamed and fled in all directions. Qin Yue’s face was already white as a sheet and when his eyes saw the massive double headed bone snake, the totally defeated Qin Yue did not even want to run.

With Qin Yue’s skills, if he gave it all that he had and put up a fight, he would be able to cause quite a bit of nuisance for Jun Wu Xie and her allies.

But with all that had happened, it had whittled down his will and crushed any hope that he had initially held.

The chaos that wrecked havoc within the Qing Yun Clan, the Elders’ protest, and his impending doom. All this were part of the plot of a young Jun Xie, who maneuvered and controlled

everything in his hand. All these events, had hammered mercilessly and driven out all the fight that had previously driven the proud Sovereign all his life.

Just killing her enemies would be easy for Jun Wu Xie, but if her enemies had all died with a single slash, it would be letting them off too easy.

So, Jun Wu Xie had made Mu Chen and Hua Yao put up an act, to incite the chaos to continue to play out till the last moment, chipping away at everyone's will. Jun Wu Xie wanted the whole Qing Yun Clan to feel the dejection, even till their moment of death.

The double headed bone snake wrapped its tail around Qin Yue, the blade like bones slicing into Qin Yue's flesh. The heartrending pain filled Qin Yue's mind and a pair of red eyes stared at him as though they had been soaked in blood. Qin Yue was living in a nightmare and his blood flowed out from his wounds, drenching his lavish clothes in a bright shade of red. The double headed bone snake brought Qin Yue and held him before Hua Yao. The once lofty and unreachable Sovereign of the Qing Yun Clan had been brought down from his seat and he looked a wretched sight. No sign of the usual haughtiness and arrogance was present, his ashen face and dejected eyes showed no signs of emotion.

"Where is the map that Ke Cang Ju gave you?" Hua Yao asked directly after shredding his disguise.

The resigned and dejected Qin Yue heard Hua Yao's query and his eyes flashed briefly in shock. Qin Yue quickly recovered and his eyes became expressionless once again before he replied weakly: "I do not know what you are talking about."

Hua Yao frowned in annoyance and gestured slightly with his hand. The bones coiled around Qin Yue began to tighten, and the bone blades cut deep, buried halfway into Qin Yue's flesh!

A pitiable wail escaped from Qin Yue, and the veins on his neck

and face bulged. His face was flushed a deep red and sweat ran down his face profusely. His head was arched back as he howled in pain.

Bright red blood dripped splattering on the floor, the pool widening in a dark crimson shade.

“Where is it?” Hua Yao asked chillingly again.

Qin Yue was losing consciousness from the pain and spasms started to wreck his body, and Qin Yue could not even speak. He could only shake his head weakly.

Louder and louder screams followed, the shrill tone piercing right into the hearts of the other Elders. They had been hopelessly terrified and had not moved at all from their spots, cowering in horror as they saw Qin Yue tormented, praying they would not be the next one to meet the same fate.

Time continued to run, unstoppable. One third of the hour had passed, and Qin Yue’s breaths were getting weaker, but he still refused to reveal a single word on the map.

Chapter 336: “Sixth Slap (8)”

“Hey, Brother Hua, if this drags on any further, he is going to die.” Qiao Chu saw that Qin Yue was getting weaker by the minute and time was running out. They had not expected Qin Yue’s refusal to reveal anything even when he was on the verge of death. They did not care if Qin Yue were to die, but with his death, Qin Yue would bring with him their only lead to the whereabouts of the map.

Hua Yao frowned, perplexed. His beautifully featured face creased in consternation.

The Qing Yun Clan was vast. If Qin Yue refused to spill the beans and die, they would have to scour the whole of the Cloudy Peaks and they would need a long time to do that.

“Leave it to me.” Jun Wu Xie said suddenly.

Hua Yao looked quizzically at Jun Wu Xie.

“I’ve said it. We only have one hour.” Jun Wu Xie said slowly. Qin Yue would die as she had said he would, within the hour, and not a moment more than that.

Hua Yao let the double headed bone snake release Qin Yue and put him on the ground. Qin Yue was covered in his own blood and his breaths were getting shallow. He did not look like he could speak as his face contorted involuntarily.

Jun Wu Xie squatted down and looked at the greatly weakened Qin Yue. She drew her silver needles, and pierced them into the twelve main arteries and stopped the bleeding from his wounds temporarily. Next, she pried Qin Yue’s mouth open and threw three elixirs into his mouth and forced him to swallow them before she stood up.

Not understanding what was happening, Hua Yao looked at Jun Wu Xie. He had seen Jun Wu Xie in action before and he had

complete trust when he handed Qin Yue over to her, although he was unsure what she would do.

Why did she stop the bleeding, popped the elixirs in him, and ignored him after that?

Qiao Chu craned his neck and looked at the stiffened Qin Yue. He had become very curious with Jun Wu Xie's myriad of strange elixirs with heaven defying effects. He had seen what horrors "Beauty's Facade" brought to its victim and he wondered what other elixir was at work here now on Qin Yue?

Time seemed to stop at that moment. The Elders remained trembling and huddled together in a group quietly on the side. They peered intently at the unmoving figure of Qin Yue, lying on the floor.

Jun Wu Xie ignored everything and only whipped out a hanky and wiped at her hands carefully and meticulously.

No one knew what Jun Xie had fed Qin Yue and why there had been no effect.

Moments later, the scene that greeted their wonder made everyone gasp in surprise!

Qin Yue's body suddenly jumped once. He bent and curled up his limbs at odd angles and a horrifying wail suddenly sounded heartrendingly breaking the silence in the hall! Qin Yue limbs looked like they were being twisted by a great force into impossible angles, and this was just the beginning. His fingers started tearing up and many gaping wounds appeared, and a white powdery looking substance flowed out mixed in with the blood from those wounds. Qin Yue's body was rocked by spasms and he shook violently as though struck by lightning.

"Bone disintegration?" Qiao Chu's eyes widened suddenly. Staring at the unidentifiable substance flowing out from the wounds as white powder, Qiao Chu finally reasoned that it could

only be from the bone, ground up into powder!

Qin Yue's finger bones were unexplainably disintegrated into powder and they flowed out with blood, staining the white floor.

All his fingers were bleeding, and one can only imagine at the agony by hearing the incessant wails coming from Qin Yue, who had been too weak to even speak.

Qin Yue's flushed face and turned grey and his bulging eyes were bloodshot red. Tears and mucus ran uncontrollable down his face and the sound of him grinding teeth heavily showed the unimaginable agony Qin Yue was suffering under.

"First the hands, next the legs. It starts with the four limbs, then the spine and the ribs. Don't worry, you will be fine. As long as I am here, I will not allow you to die just yet." Jun Wu Xie finally spoke to him, and the corners of her mouth curled up devilishly once again.

Chapter 337: “Sixth Slap (9)”

Qin Yue’s bloodshot eyes were staring unwavering at Jun Wu Xie, filled with hatred and pain. No one could imagine the agony he was feeling. He could not move and the intense pain tore through his body unendingly almost driving him insane.

He would never have guessed that such inhumane torment could possibly be inflicted on the human body.

It felt like millions of ants were gnawing on his bones, bit by bit, little by little, and his flesh disintegrated together with the bones. At that moment, Qin Yue’s only wish was for death to claim him quickly!

The pain felt under the torture by the double headed bone snake was in no way comparable to the unimaginable agony he was feeling at that moment!

He had felt faint several times through his ordeal, but the silver needles stuck in him kept him conscious and did not allow him any reprieve.

Although only the briefest of moments had passed, it already felt like a long year to Qin Yue. Forced to remain conscious, the heart rending pain made him yearn fervently for death, but death’s door was closed to him.

Qin Yue’s will crumbled to dust in but that brief passing moment, and blood stained his mouth. His howls did not end and he finally loosened his lips.

“Beneath the stone behind my chair in my study!”

Let death come!

Come quickly!

The torment was too much to take, and he couldn’t bear it a moment more!

Sorry!

Really really sorry!

If he knew this day was to come, he would not have usurped the seat of the Sovereign! He would have been content to remain a lowly disciple and not put through this torture!

Jun Wu Xie turned and looked at Hua Yao. Hua Yao froze in shock a moment before he clasped his hand over a fist to thank Jun Wu Xie, and left immediately with Qiao Chu towards Qin Yue's study, to retrieve the item.

In the main hall, Jun Wu Xie swept her gaze over the cowering pale faced Elders, who were all staring wide eyed at Qin Yue who was screaming for his own death. She then turned to Mu Chen with a smile.

“You want to do it yourself?”

Mu Chen narrowed his eyes, filled with malice. He looked at the violently shaking Qin Yue lying on the ground, without feeling an ounce of pity.

Qin Yue might look extremely pitiful at that moment, but all that pity was completely overshadowed by hate!

He would never forget the time when his parents had died from the poison before Qin Yue. He remembered vividly Qin Yue face then, the face hideous with malice and triumph. He remembered the late Elders who had been loyal to the previous Sovereign, mercilessly murdered by Qin Yue, one by one.

Qin Yue did not deserve to live!

But his death must not come so easily!

His lone life, could not atone for his lifetime of sins!

Qin Yue had ruined his life, and Qin Yue had brought the Qing Yun Clan into ruin!

“No, I want him to live till the last moment, and suffer the

agony.” Mu Chen said through gritted teeth, his hatred flaring brightly in his eyes.

Jun Wu Xie did not say anything more and turned away from Qin Yue. She left Mu Chen alone, to savour his revenge slowly, and not steal from him any of the sweetness.

Qin Yue had thought that if he revealed the location of the map, he would be relieved from the torment. But Mu Chen’s reply drove him into utter despair. The once greatly revered Sovereign of the mightiest clan throughout the lands, was now reduced to a trembling heap on the floor, his body writhing in agony.

His eyes pleaded for a quick death.

But, till his own time was up, his burning wish would not be granted.

A gong sounded, announcing the arrival of noon, and the sun was at its zenith. The blazing heat beat down, and clouds of poison mist suddenly permeated eleven of the Cloudy Peaks. The Inner House disciples of the various peaks were not aware of the approaching doom and were feasting on food, and boasting of their nefarious crimes with pride.

Jun Wu Xie lowered her eyes, and removed the needles that had kept Qin Yue alive all this while in one smooth sweep!

Without the needles, Qin Yue’s eyes suddenly bulged, and his body gave one big jerk, and he finally breathed his last!

Chapter 338: “Overpowered (1)”

Just as Qiao Chu and Hua Yao came back, they saw Qin Yue breathe his last. They were not in the least concerned about it though that man was the Sovereign of the mighty Qing Yun Clan.

“We’ve got it.” Hua Yao nodded to Jun Wu Xie.

“It is time to send everyone on their way. Mu Chen, it’s time to get your disciples off the mountain.” Jun Wu Xie turned to leave resolutely, and the rest of them followed after.

In the main hall, the members of the Qing Yun Clan were still too terrified to move. As they watched Jun Wu Xie leave, they wanted to heave a sigh of relief, but Jun Wu Xie’s words just before she left made them shiver uncontrollably.

Three massive beasts finished up the massacre within the main hall and the place was bathed in a bright shade of red. The bloodbath was seemingly used to cleanse this mighty clan of its sins and filth.

As they walked down the Blue Cloud Peak, the bodies of its disciples lay scattered all over, unmoving in death. Even till the last moment of their lives, they did not know what killed them.

The once bustling Cloudy Peaks, were now covered in a shroud of silence. Throughout the journey from the Blue Cloud Peak to the Cloud Treading Peak, Mu Chen did not see anyone still alive.

Jun Wu Xie had delivered on her promise. To annihilate all within the Qing Yun Clan!

“What do you have planned next?” Hua Yao asked, turning to Jun Wu Xie. The matter with the Qing Yun Clan had come to a close and from here on, the Qing Yun Clan ceased to exist anymore.

Jun Wu Xie pondered a moment as she surveyed the majestic peaks that had once housed the mighty Qing Yun Clan, and replied

softly: “I want to make a trip home first.”

She had been away from home for a long time, and it was time she went back.

“We’ll go back with you then! Mu Chen said he needs to stay a while longer to sort things out with the disciples of the Outer House and the resident mercenaries, and will go to the Qi Kingdom in about two weeks to look for you. We’ll accompany you back, and after you have settled your own things, you can help us to refine the elixir.” Qiao Chu said excitedly. After hanging around Jun Xie for a time, he felt that Jun Xie was a good companion to have around.

Jun Xie was still so young, but the schemes that meticulous mind came up with astounded him completely.

Even when faced with the all powerful Qing Yun Clan, the enemy had crumbled and fallen into the depths of hell before that mind. Hanging around a little demon like that, made his days so much more exciting!

Jun Wu Xie looked at the enthusiastic Qiao Chu, and nodded after a moment’s thought.

This time, with Hua Yao’s and Qiao Chu’s help, she had achieved her objective to obliterate the Qing Yun Clan much more smoothly. Compared to her initial plan, she was able to shorten the process by two weeks.

As with any cooperation, they would have to keep to their word.

In Jun Wu Xie’s mind, she had recognised Hua Yao and Qiao Chu as her temporary allies in their cooperation. Little did she know, that this chance meeting that resulted in their first alliance, would bind their lives together for the rest of their lives.

The three of them made their way down the mountain, and left the tying up of loose ends to Mu Chen.

As the trio ambled down the mountain together, Qiao Chu was

excited, and he chattered on non-stop, but Hua Yao and Jun Wu Xie remained silent.

Suddenly, when the trio reached the halfway point, two figures appeared at the summit of the Cloudy Peaks.

The two figures saw the peaks littered with bodies, and their eyes sparked in interest.

“What is wrong with the Qing Yun Clan? It had been just half a year and they have fallen to such a pitiful state?” The attractive looking man said with a laugh as he surveyed the scattered bodies, but his eyes flashed with a malicious chill.

The other man frowned. At that moment, the gem bracelet he wore on his wrist emitted a green glow and the man gasped.

“A plant ring spirit actually exists in the Lower Realm!!”

Chapter 339: “Overpowered (2)”

“Are you sure?” The man who was laughing asked in shock.

“There is a reaction from the spirit gem, that person must still be close! We should still be able to catch up!” The man said staring at the green glow the spirit gem was giving out, and his eyes narrowed.

“Haha! We have searched till the soles of our shoes were all worn out to no avail, and now a chance meeting has brought it right before us! We cannot let it escape!” The man’s laughter grew more intense.

The two figures suddenly blurred and disappeared from the summit of the Cloudy Peaks!

At the midpoint of the mountain, Jun Wu Xie looked at the massive beast ring spirits following behind them. The black and white fur of one of the beasts looked just like the National Treasure of one of the countries in her past life, but the size of the beast before her was so much bigger than what she remembered.

“Isn’t my dear Rolly just majestic and heroic looking!?” Qiao Chu saw that Jun Xie was staring at his ring spirit and he sang his praises proudly patting the massive tummy. That furry rounded tummy looked extremely inviting to touch.

The little black cat on Jun Wu Xie’s shoulder raised a paw and covered its face.

Here it comes!

Its mistress was at it again!

Jun Wu Xie stared intently at the humongous “panda”, keeping herself silent for a long while before she asked: “Can I touch?”

“Of course!” Qiao Chu said jovially, feeling especially generous.

Jun Wu Xie walked up to Rolly and stared at the massive bear

that was over two meters tall before her. Her chilly eyes were extremely focused at that moment.

Rolly tilted its head and looked in confusion at the tiny figure standing before it. Rolly was conscious of its Master's mind and knew that the figure before it was a friend and not a foe, and it was not to attack.

They stood staring at each other a long moment and Qiao Chu had thought that Jun Xie was not going to touch Rolly anymore. At that moment, Jun Wu Xie squealed delightedly and plopped herself onto Rolly's bulging tummy, her hands fully extended, trying her hardest to envelope the massive bear into her tiny arms.

Buried into the soft fur, and immersing herself into the velvety smoothness, Jun Wu Xie's eyes were closed in revel, enjoying every moment.

The little black cat on Jun Wu Xie's back almost wanted to cry.

Its mistress' illness had struck once again!

Jun Wu Xie did not hold much fondness for many things, but she was completely defenceless against furry creatures. When she had first applied to be a vet, it was firstly for the sake of revenge, and the second reason was just because she loved these furry creatures.

Heaven knows, the expressionless and cold face on Jun Wu Xie, when faced with little cats and dogs, changed drastically and the eyes stayed fixated and sparkled so brightly that it always made the little black cat want to cry.

It seemed that even after being reborn, her illness had not gone away!

The double headed snake did not draw any attention from her, but the huge cuddly panda and its charming innocence was irresistible to Jun Wu Xie, brought about by her weakness towards adorable and furry creatures.

Qiao Chu's jaw dropped as he stared at Jun Xie who had always

been cold and distant, burrow himself into his ring spirit's tummy and the always chatty Qiao Chu suddenly could not find any words to say.

The.....

Change was just too astounding!

Jun Wu Xie's unwavering calm and overwhelming intelligence always made people forget her young age. But her actions with Rolly brought out the little girl hidden within completely.

"My Rolly..... must be..... exceptionally adorable....." Qiao Chu struggled a long time to squeeze those words out of his throat. He had thought that Jun Xie had been impressed with Rolly's majestic stature and dominating power. But it seemed that he had completely misunderstood.

Hua Yao's corners of his mouth twitched, but he did not say a word.

And high up in the trees at their side, the hidden Ye Sha looked at Jun Wu Xie's sudden and drastic change in manner, made him almost fell off in shock.

He would never have imagined, that the cold and highly intelligent Miss, had such a weakness for furry ring spirits!

Chapter 340: “Overpowered (3)”

“This, should be of interest to my Lord.” Ye Sha rubbed his chin, as he released a tiny black snake from among the trees.

Ye Sha’s daily task was to protect Jun Wu Xie in secret. But the Miss was vicious and there was nothing she could not handle on her own in the Qing Yun Clan. Ye Sha’s protection soon became superfluous and his daily task quickly became collecting intelligence on her likes and dislikes as well as her daily activities. He wrote the information on a small piece of paper, and sent it via a black snake to deliver it to Jun Wu Yao, in the Kingdom of Qi.

At the same moment Ye Sha released the black snake, his face suddenly stiffened!

Two highly formidable presences were approaching at an alarming speed!

Ye Sha perked up, and his body tensed. His eyes scanned the surroundings carefully.

Reveling in the comfort of Rolly’s furry tummy, Jun Wu Xie was completely relaxed when suddenly, a stranger’s voice spoke, interrupting her revelry.

“So, that’s where you are.”

The voice that had sounded suddenly made the trio turn towards it.

They saw two attractive looking men a distance away from them. The two men, were gauging the three of them carefully and the eyes on the two men were rather queer. They had seemed to be appraising goods rather than looking at three youths.

Their contempt was obvious, and they did not bother to hide it.

“It is you? Or you? Or rather..... the little one here.” The man was smiling as he queried, looking at Hua Yao, Qiao Chu and lastly

his eyes fell on Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie's eyes went cold. Without knowing why, the two men who had suddenly appeared, gave her an extremely bad feeling.

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu were wary. Rolly came to stand beside Qiao Chu and the double headed bone snake put up a defensive stance.

"Huh? What am I seeing here? A member of the Bone Shifters Tribe in the Lower Realm. Kid, that double headed bone snake's your ring spirit right?" The man narrowed his maliciously, looking at Hua Yao.

Hua Yao stiffened, and his eyes stared back dangerously.

"Yin Yang Bear..... Tsk tsk. How did these ring spirits appear in the Lower Realm, you've really opened my eyes today." His eyes turned back onto Rolly as he spoke.

"Double headed bone snake, Yin Yang Bear. You're both not the person we're looking for....." The man's eyes turned slowly to Jun Wu Xie and his mouth curled at the corners.

"Hey kid, I am guessing you have a plant ring spirit on you."

Jun Wu Xie heart jumped, she had not released Little Lotus, so how did they find out about the plant based ring spirit hidden within her body?

"Who are you guys?" Jun Wu Xie asked coldly. The feeling these two men gave her was completely different from all the others she had met. Just by standing before her, they gave out an enormous pressure, clutching at her heart, making it difficult for her to breathe.

It was a feeling that Jun Wu Xie was feeling for the first time after she was reborn.

"We are good people. Kid, just tell it to me like I'm your older

brother. Is your ring spirit a plant based one?" His wide smile made his eyes narrow as he coaxed gently.

Jun Wu Xie frowned deeply and her face showed enmity.

"Sigh..... don't get too excited now. We're here just to ask you a few things." The man saw that his act was not working on Jun Wu Xie and he sighed in helplessness dramatically.

The other man who had been standing silent on the side was staring dangerously at Jun Wu Xie instead.

"We don't know each other, and we have nothing to talk about." Jun Wu Xie took note of the actions taken by the two men.

"Since you are being so uncooperative here, we can only....." The man who was smiling said and suddenly, his eyes flashed bitingly cold.

Chapter 341: “Overpowered (4)”

Before his last word reached the ears of the three youths, he suddenly disappeared from his spot.

Jun Wu Xie was surprised as a cold chill rushed into her chest. The next moment, a black shadow dragged her backwards.

Everything simply happened too fast. Hua Yao and Qiao Chu who were just beside her did not know what was happening and by the time they realised it, they saw the man who had disappeared was suddenly standing at the spot Jun Xie previously was with a torn piece of cloth gripped within his hand.

On the other side, a coldly handsome man dressed in black had appeared out of nowhere and he stared gravely. Jun Wu Xie was standing quietly behind the man and a part of her coat was torn, fluttering in the wind.

“Hmm, not bad at all.” The smiling man assessed the man dressed in black who had suddenly appeared. His smile intensified and his eyes flared with a killer’s instinct.

Jun Wu Xie stared at the back of the man dressed in black, her eyes thoughtful. Everything had happened in the briefest of moments and she had not felt any presence approaching her but the two men had suddenly appeared!

She saw that the front of her coat had been torn by the man who was smiling. If not for the man in black’s sudden interference, the only thing torn out might not have been just her coat, but her heart!

Sweat ran down Jun Wu Xie’s back. Since her rebirth, she felt for the first time, that the claws of death had come so close to her!

That man with the perpetual smile on his face had instantly gone for the kill with his first strike!

“I would implore for Miss to leave this place immediately.” Ye

Sha faced his back to Jun Wu Xie, his stern face was gravely serious and his eyes were fixated guardedly on the white robed man with the smile on his face.

If he had not dragged Miss back at that moment, they might have lost her by now.

“Who are you?” As Ye Sha had his back to Jun Wu Xie, she could not see Ye Sha’s face. She could feel that the man dressed in black harboured no ill intentions towards her, and was even protecting her from harm.

Ye Sha did not turn back but replied calmly: “I am acting under the orders of Master Wu Yao to guard Miss from harm. My lowly name will only dirty Miss’ ears. I would humbly request that Miss leave immediately. These two men are more than Miss can handle.”

Jun Wu Xie froze a moment. She had not heard Jun Wu Yao’s name for a while and hearing it suddenly made her heart wince.

My elder brother actually sent someone to protect her.

Ye Sha hesitated a moment before he said to Hua Yao and Qiao Chu: “I would need to trouble the two of you to escort Miss away from here. Leave the two men to me.”

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu did not realise anything amiss to Jun Xie having been addressed as a Miss, but Ye Sha’s words made them feel a bad premonition of things rise within their chests.

“Sure.” The two of them agreed readily.

Ye Sha nodded gravely.

The white robed man looked at Ye Sha disapprovingly.

“You cannot possibly be thinking that you can stop the two of us all by yourself right?” The strongest they have in the Lower Realm can only be a purple level spirit anyway.

“You will soon find out.” Ye Sha threw out a chilling laugh and

suddenly shouted: “GO!”

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu reacted immediately and they lifted Jun Wu Xie and ran down the mountain. No matter who the other two men were, they were not people they could take on. The man in black protecting Jun Xie was clearly much stronger than the two of them were. In a battle among exponents of such overpowering might, the two of them would only become a hindrance if they stayed behind.

“Running away!? Not that easy!” The white robed man narrowed his eyes dangerously and was about to give chase when Ye Sha stood in his way!

Chapter 342: “Overpowered (5)”

Ye Sha blocked the path leading down the mountain, denying the two men passage.

The white robed man threw a palm at Ye Sha impatiently. Unexpectedly, Ye Sha countered and struck back with his palm!

Two strong opposing forces exploded at that moment, and the white robed man stared at Ye Sha in disbelief when he found out that Ye Sha’s power was on par with his!

“You are not from the Lower Realm! Where are you from!?” The white robed man was shocked, as the smile faded from his face.

Ye Sha laughed coldly, but did not reply.

“Damn!” The white robed man cursed under his breath and soon, he was completely engaged with Ye Sha. The two mighty powers clashed. The surrounding grass and plants were uprooted by the rush, the wind kicked up from their movements and the ground tremored lightly below their feet!

The white robed man found that he was unable to take down Ye Sha and his muttered curses did not stop.

Ye Sha noted his opponent’s strikes and movements and committed them to memory, speedily scanning his mind to identify his opponent.

Just when the two powerful forces were deeply immersed in their combat, the grey robed man who had been awfully silent all this while charged into the battle. A powerful blast exploded from his palm, aimed directly at Ye Sha vitals. Held down by the white robed man’s ferocious attacks, Ye Sha could only shift slightly. The blast hit him squarely on the chest and a mouthful of blood suddenly sprayed from Ye Sha’s mouth.

“Leave this guy to me. Do not let the plant ring spirit escape.” The grey robed man’s eyes were steely cold as he instructed the

white robed man.

The white robed man stared at Ye Sha in anger, and turned to rush down the mountain. Ye Sha wanted to chase after him but the grey robed man had already engaged him and did not allow Ye Sha any choice but to fight!

Moments into the battle, Ye Sha grew frustrated. The grey robed man was more highly skilled than the white robed one!

This level of skill, would be considered very strong even in the Middle Realm!

.....

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu did not release Jun Wu Xie but ran quickly without stopping. Their speed was much faster than Jun Wu Xie and they could see the foot of the mountain before them. But a persistent white figure suddenly appeared before them on the path down the mountain.

“Just where, do you guys think you’re going?” The white robed man’s eyes were narrowed to a slit and a chill emanated out as those eyes stared unwaveringly at Jun Wu Xie.

What amazing speed! Hua Yao and Qiao Chu were deeply surprised and they put their bodies before Jun Wu Xie, protecting their comrade behind. The double headed bone snake and the Ying Yang bear were standing at the ends of each side.

Jun Wu Xie was looking at the backs of Hua Yao and Qiao Chu, her face frowning slightly.

“His target is only me, and this has nothing to do with you. You should just leave.” Jun Wu Xie took a deep breath. Judging from Hua Yao’s and Qiao Chu’s reactions, it would seem that even if the two of them attacked at once, they would not be a match for the white robed man.

The enemy came eyeing Little Lotus hidden within her and it should not concern the two of them.

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu did not even turn their heads but stood stoically in front of Jun Wu Xie.

“Little Xie, your reasoning sounds a little off. Since we are brothers in arms, no amount of reasoning would ever make us abandon our brother and escape on our own, leaving you in the lurch.” Qiao Chu’s voice was tinged with his carefree and joyous personality.

Hua Yao replied: “We promised that man that we would bring you to safety, away from here.”

Jun Wu Xie was at a loss for words. She opened her mouth and stared at the two youths she had only known for a month. She had not known, that they saw her as a brother.....

At that moment, Hua Yao’s and Qiao Chu’s backs, overlapped the slender figure in her mind.

When they were similarly in perilous danger, that moron had done the same thing. Standing stoically in front of her.....

“Go!” Jun Wu Xie gritted her teeth and suddenly slipped past the two of them, and the little black cat on her shoulder morphed into the black beast.

She never wanted to see ever again, anyone else fall trying to protect her!

Chapter 343: “Overpowered (6)”

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu looked at Jun Wu Xie in surprise. That small frame before them had a backbone stronger than any!

“I don’t need you to protect me. Between us, we are merely allies in our cooperation. You do not need to give up your lives for that. I will not be able to repay you enough.” She already felt indebted to that moron and she did not want to increase that debt with any more people.

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu were speechless as they stared at Jun Wu Xie in confusion.

Jun Wu Xie’s words had been cold and almost sounded heartless. But the two of them knew deep in their hearts that Jun Wu Xie said it in such a way to make them back off and not get dragged into the danger before them.

“We need no repayment, we just feel like it.” Qiao Chu laughed as he said that.

Jun Wu Xie remained where she was, her back ramrod straight, unwilling to turn her head.

The white robed man looked on impatiently at the three youths. “Brat, I only want your ring spirit. If you don’t want your comrades to die, just stay still and let me take your ring spirit.”

The three youths put together would not need more than a finger of his to take them on.

“Enough with your nonsense! If you want to touch Little Xie, you’ll only be able to do that after we’re dead!” Qiao Chu stood forward without hesitation and released his spiritual powers. Unexpectedly, the spiritual power surrounding him was actually purplish in colour!

Hua Yao followed right after and released his spiritual power. A purple glow emanated from his body!

Both of them have attained the purple level in their spiritual powers!

Jun Wu Xie looked in surprise at Hua Yao and Qiao Chu. They were both just a few years older than she was and they had both attained the peak purple level!

It had been a century since a purple spirit had appeared under the skies, and these two were still youths. How did they achieve that!?

The white robed stared in surprise as well when he saw the purple glow envelope Hua Yao and Qiao Chu. But soon, a smile appeared on his face.

“Forcefully upgrading your spiritual powers..... You would not last long, would you? Purple spirit..... Ha! I guess that’s the highest level you can forcefully raise yourselves up to at the moment. A pity..... Two purple spirits, are still beneath my notice!” The white robed man’s eyes narrowed and he charged right at Hua Yao and Qiao Chu!

Qiao Chu and Hua Yao used every ounce of their spiritual powers to take on the white robed man together. Even the double headed bone snake and the Ying Yang Bear joined the battle. Jun Wu Xie could not hold herself back any longer and rushed into the battle with the black beast!

It was one against six, and it should have been a given who had the advantage. But as the battle raged, the outcome was totally unbelievable!

The white robed man, under the assault from six joined forces, took them on easily!

Even having two highly skilled purple spirits joining forces were not a match for the white robed man.

Jun Wu Xie, who had just broken through to the orange level was not able to contribute much to their might.

The white robed man handled his opponents with a cold smile on

his face. One of the strikes of his palm broke the tail of the double headed bone snake, and a flying kick sent the Ying Yang Bear soaring. The white robed man with his body still in mid air, fully extended his arms outwards, and a hand grabbed onto Hua Yao's shoulder. He tightened his grip and the sound of bones breaking could be heard. He then flung his hand and Hua Yao was thrown out of the battle. His other hand clenched into a fist and he swung it smashing into Qiao Chu's face!

In a flash!

Blood flew!

Qiao Chu's temple bone cracked and blood flowed from the opened wound. Half of his face was bruised black and blue.

The black beast leapt at the white robed man from the back, but was held by its throat and lifted.

"Kid, if this fight continues, your comrades are really going to lose their lives." The white robed man said as he laughed evilly, still holding the black beast by the throat.

Jun Wu Xie was already battered and bruised, her left hand was broken in the battle earlier. She bit on her lip and stared coldly at the frighteningly powerful white robed man.

Chapter 344: “Overpowered (7)”

“Why struggle so? Having just you die is better than getting them all killed together with you isn’t it?” The white robed man laughed jovially, but the look in his eyes were venomous like they had just been dipped in lethal poison.

Jun Wu Xie clenched her jaw tightly. Since she had been reborn, this was the first time she felt so defeated.

In this strange world, highly skilled exponents were plentiful and her poison did not work all the time against them!

“Whether we live or die isn’t up to you! Kill me if you can! Spare me your blabbering!” Qiao Chu struggled as he pushed himself up. On the side of his face that was already heavily bruised, the flesh above his eye had split and blood flowed freely. He could not see through that eye anymore but he still refused to back down and dragged himself to come stand beside Jun Wu Xie. He panted slightly from the effort and rested a hand on Jun Wu Xie’s shoulder.

“I said it before. Once within the Qing Yun Clan, I will look out for you. We are now still within the Cloudy Peaks right?” Qiao Chu pointed at the path that led down the mountain and his bloodied face as he struggled to put on a smile.

“We agreed to go back to cultivate the elixir, and if you are not leaving, neither are we.” Hua Yao dragged himself to walk over to them. His shoulder blade was crushed and even if he could control the shape and form of his bones, he was unable to shift bones that had been crushed.

Jun Wu Xie’s breathing slowed at that moment. A strange feeling came over her that spread out from her heart. It felt foreign..... yet a little familiar at the same time.

“Since you wish for death, I can grant that to all of you!” The

white robed man exerted his strength on his hand, and broke the neck of the black beast. The black beast stopped struggling and its four limbs drooped.

Qiao Chu and Hua Yao moved to charge again, but this time, Jun Wu Xie pushed them down firmly. She kicked the ground and leapt, soaring towards the white robed man.

She was not strong enough, and might not get out of this alive. But, if she was aiming for mutual destruction, she was at the very least capable of that!

Grandfather, Uncle..... Wu Xie is sorry.....

Jun Wu Xie's eyes flashed grim with determination, and the silver needles that appeared in her hands were stuck into the major arteries into her own body. Her body speedily reached the white robed man and the white robed man was shocked a moment, unsure why Jun Wu Xie had come to him suddenly to seek her own death. In that moment of hesitation, the black beast whose neck he had broken suddenly came back to life and pounced onto his back, biting onto the man's neck before he could react.

The white robed man raged in anger as the black beast bite drew blood. He grabbed at the black beast's head with one hand and wanted to throw the beast off his back. A strange force suddenly flowed through the white robed man's body. He felt as in his body, as if another soul had barged in forcefully! And it messed up his consciousness completely.

"You want my ring spirit so badly? Sure! I'll give it to you! When you are dead! I'll surely give it to you!" Jun Wu Xie was right beside the white robed man and she lifted her head, her cold eyes were frighteningly chilled in determined and unshakeable resolve.

As those bitingly cold eyes stared at him, the white robed man found himself unable to move!

The black beast's fangs pierced further into flesh, opening up a

channel into the white robed man's soul.

Jun Wu Xie and the little black cat were joined souls and when both their souls were aflame and burning, it brought about a destructive blow directly onto a person's soul, and circumvented the person's spiritual power's prowess.

The white robed man completely overpowered them, but an attack on his soul would not be that easily avoided!

Jun Wu Xie made the black beast play dead, just to win them this tiny opening!

She would rather sacrifice herself to bring down the enemy with her than cause the deaths of her comrades fighting to protect her!

Not anymore! No one must die protecting her ever again!

Not even once! She would shoulder it all!

Chapter 345: “Fight to Live (1)”

Every moment that their souls burned, it ate into Jun Wu Xie’s and the black beast’s life force. An assault that burned up their life force was unstoppable.

It was Jun Wu Xie’s ultimate finisher, and she could only use it once in her life.

The white robed man’s soul was extremely strong and for Jun Wu Xie and the black beast to restrict his movement, they had expended a great amount of their life force. In a blink of an eye, Jun Wu Xie’s body was covered in perspiration, and her face was extremely pale, completely drained of colour. The black beast’s fur had lost its shine and every strand had turned dry and brittle.

Hua Yao and Qiao Chu could see that Jun Wu Xie was looking extremely unwell. They wanted to get close but an unseen force pushed them back.

When Jun Wu Xie used her soul to attack, a soul shield formed and encapsulated her body, that did not allow anyone to come close.

“Little Xie! You’ll really die! Stop it now!” Qiao Chu panicked and shouted at Jun Xie. He did not know what Jun Xie was doing but he could guess from seeing Jun Xie’s face that was gradually losing its colour that he must have used some forbidden technique that threatened his own life to stop the white robed man’s attacks.

Worry filled the eyes of the two helpless youths. Hua Yao tried all ways and means but was still unable to get close.

Jun Wu Xie did not move, or rather, could not move.

She had not protected that moron in her past life, and in this new chance at life again, she would not allow the same tragedy to strike again.

Her life here was an unexpected find and her rebirth might not

have been that long, but she had found family bonds that she had never experienced, that had thawed her long frozen heart and allowed her to feel warmth. She felt she had already gained!

Having been suppressed within her own body by Jun Wu Xie, Little Lotus was overcome in anxiety. Qiao Chu and Hua Yao did not understand the situation, but he knew it better than anyone. His link with Jun Wu Xie's soul allowed him to directly feel Jun Wu Xie's gradually diminishing soul. His own fear made Little Lotus almost burst out in tears.

His mistress must not burn her soul any longer, or she would die from it!

When her soul burned out and disappeared, no one would be able to let Jun Wu Xie be reborn again!

"No..... Don't die....." Little Lotus was already crying in Jun Wu Xie's body. He loved this Mistress of his and he did not want her to die like this.

He compacted his soul bit by bit, and Little Lotus made a sudden dash out of Jun Wu Xie's body!

A bright flash of light burst from Jun Wu Xie's finger! The violent impact forcefully blasted Jun Wu Xie away from the white robed man and the assault on the soul was suddenly broken!

A gush of blood sprayed out through Jun Wu Xie's mouth, her burnt up diminished soul and the recoil from the sudden interruption nearly ruptured her internal organs!

A figure covered in flames hurriedly held up the collapsing Jun Wu Xie!

Jun Wu Xie's eyes were barely open, overcome with weakness, as she looked at Little Lotus, who had rushed out anxiously, who had broken out from her body on his own accord.

That small chubby face was covered in tears and balls of blue flame surrounded his tiny body. The blue flames reflected in his

eyes and made the always timid little guy look uncompromisingly resolute.

“Don’t die, I don’t want my Mistress to die.” Little Lotus looked at Jun Wu Xie in despair, and Jun Wu Xie was no longer capable of speech at that moment. She frowned at Little Lotus, and shook her head weakly.

The burning of her soul had put her body under great trauma, and a deficiency in the soul, could be cured by any kind of elixir or medicine.

Little Lotus’ eyes rimmed heavily with his tears and he opened his mouth. He stared at the stubby arms holding Jun Wu Xie and he narrowed his eyes in resolute determination. He bit off a piece of flesh from his arm and fed it to Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie’s eyes flashed with refusal and her heart wrenched, but she was too weak to reject. Little Lotus fed Jun Wu Xie with the flesh from his arm as the healing properties of the Snow Lotus was unparalleled.

“Fight to live!”

Chapter 346: “Fight to Live (2)”

Little Lotus put Jun Wu Xie gently onto the ground and cast a glance at her weak form, before he turned to stare at the black beast with its fangs still lodged in the white robed man!

Blue flames erupted from his body and flared suddenly!

Little Lotus gave out a heaven shattering roar engulfed in those flames!

At that moment, the tiny chubby figure started to grow under raging flames!

Drunk Lotus raged in unbridled fury and his eyes burned with undeniable hatred as he cast his gaze on the white robed man!

“Little black.” Drunk Lotus squeezed those two words through his teeth.

The black beast narrowed its eyes and the light was fading from them. Jun Wu Xie’s assault on the soul was forcefully broken by the involuntary and sudden appearance of Little Lotus. But the black beast had not moved an inch and if it let go, the white robed man would embark on a massacre and Jun Wu Xie would surely not live.

But having lost Jun Wu Xie as the main pillar in the deadly assault, the black beast’s soul would only be able to hold the opponent down for a extremely short period of time and was not able to inflict any damage.

“Our debt between us, will be settled in our next lives. Let’s kill this guy here first!” Drunk Lotus had only one arm left and his fist’s knuckles crackled as he clenched it tightly.

The black beast let out a low growl as if in reply to Drunk Lotus.

Drunk Lotus did not hesitate any further and charged at the white robed man held down by black beast in the deadly grip of its

fangs at the sacrifice of its soul. Drunk Lotus struck heavily at the man's spirit, putting everything he had behind his punch in this battle to the death!

The white robed man let out a low moan and his eyes suddenly turned bloodshot. He could not believe he was injured by this group of trash in the lower realm!

“So you are the plant based spirit? At last.....” He struggled to smile and the white robed man suddenly released an explosive surge of spiritual power and the energy blasted the black beast away from him! He leapt at Drunk Lotus and grabbed him by the neck.

“Wait till you are devoured and I'll see how arrogant you can be then!”

The strength of that grip on Drunk Lotus did not allow him to struggle free, but he ignored the overpowering hold on his neck and kicked the man on the chest with all his might!

The white robed man was pushed back a few steps from Drunk Lotus' kick but the grip on his neck did not loosen and he was dragged along with the man.

“Damn!” The white robed man was furious, he had never found himself in such a compromised situation.

The grip on Drunk Lotus' neck tightened further and the white robed man wanted nothing more than to break Drunk Lotus' neck. “Anyway, as a ring spirit, you would not die. Enjoy the suffering I am about to inflict on you!”

The white robed man stretched a hand towards Drunk Lotus' head!

At that moment, a beastly growl sounded, and the black beast who had been blown away leapt at the white robed man and sank his fangs into his upper arm.

The white robed man's eyes flashed in rage with the pain. He did

not think that his opponents would turn out to be a group of opponents so suicidal and persistent!

He concentrated his spiritual power on both his hands and the surging force shot straight towards the black beast's head. The black beast's jaws remained firmly lodged in the arm with its death's grip but the blast from the white robed man's strike tore half the flesh out from its jaws giving the black beast an agonising and devastating wound.

Drunk Lotus was driven into spasms from the surging spiritual powers and he bit hard on his own tongue to let the pain force himself to remain conscious. He raised a trembling hand to hold the white robed man's arm tightly, to restrict its mobility.

"Attack him now!" Drunk Lotus suddenly shouted with everything he could muster.

Hua Yao and Qiao Church who had recovered a little of their energy at the side leapt at this final opportunity gained at the expense of their comrades life force and struck at the white robed man with everything they had!

A loud blast sounded through the mountain and the white robed man's spiritual energy flared a blinding brilliance!

Chapter 347: “Fight to Live (3)”

In the blink of an eye, with the exception of Drunk Lotus, everyone else was blown away from that explosive release of spiritual power!

“You pipsqueaks do not possess enough power to kill me.” The white robed man laughed coldly and his eyes burned with rage. His palm burst through Drunk Lotus’ abdomen with a single strike and Drunk Lotus’ face contorted in agony. Spiritual energy burst through Drunk Lotus’ body and in the next moment, Drunk Lotus’ body slumped and remained motionless. The blue flames that covered Drunk Lotus dissipated and his body started to slowly disperse into a golden glittering light, morphing into a badly ravaged Snow Lotus in the hand of the white robed man.

Throwing the withering Snow Lotus on Jun Wu Xie’s body, the white robed man sneered: “I will put all of you through unimaginable agony.”

Jun Wu Xie lay on the ground, unable to move a muscle and stared weakly at the Snow Lotus that had rolled to rest against her cheek. A flower that should have been flawlessly white, that radiated with unblemished beauty, now lay withering sadly, and had lost half of its pale petals, looking like it would perish at any time.

“You’re still at it?” Another chill voice rang, and the grey robed man appeared before the eyes of the people gathered near the foot of the mountain, his steps hindered by a badly bloodied and unconscious Ye Sha, who was being dragged behind in the grip of the grey robed man.

“Just limbering up a little, I’ll finish it right now.” The white robed man replied.

The grey robed man only shot him a look of impatience but did not say anything.

All of a sudden, the unconscious Ye Sha sprang into action!

He broke free of the grey robed man's grip and gathered his life's blood and concentrated them onto his palm. A bright red ray formed and sped right at the white robed man, piercing him straight through the chest!

Ye Sha expended every last bit of his powers and released a humongous black snake. The black snake slithered away speedily as it coiled everyone lying on the ground into its tail!

"Miss! Allow me to deliver all of you away from here!"

As soon as the last of his words left him, his body blew up in a mighty explosion! The powerful blast completely engulfed the grey robed man who was standing closest to him and dealt him a devastating blow!

In the same moment.....

The Cloudy Peaks rocked!

The black snake held Jun Wu Xie and the others in its tail and took them off the mountains!

Wild winds suddenly roared, wrecking havoc. The black mist that permeated covered the whole mountain path and it was specked with red, the blood of Ye Sha's, his ultimate sacrifice by blowing himself up.

Jun Wu Xie was coiled within the black snake's tail, the withering Snow Lotus in her arms. Her cold eyes staring fixedly on the explosion of blood mist.

Till the moment that Ye Sha had detonated himself to save her, she had not even found out his name. Who was he.....

Unable to remain conscious any longer from the heavy trauma to her soul, Jun Wu Xie succumbed and fell into a deep sleep.

.....

She did not know how long she slept, and Jun Wu Xie woke up

from her deep slumber in shock.

That blood mist had left a deep impression in her mind and it was as though she was back at the place where she almost died.

“You’re awake!” A soft and tender voice suddenly sounded by Jun Wu Xie’s ear. Jun Wu Xie turned her head and saw a pleasant and pretty young girl sitting by her bedside, her eyes like limpid pools, smiling happily at her.

Jun Wu Xie frowned slightly, but she did not sense any danger from the young girl. She lowered her eyes and found a tiny form sleeping beside her, a familiar sight.

The little black cat was soundly asleep, its body covered in layers of bandages. The tiny body was curled up tightly in a ball, leaning against the side of Jun Wu Xie’s pillow.

“Master had wanted to bring it out for treatment but it had refused to leave your side. Rest assured though, Master has already steadied its tattered soul and it would recover after a period of treatment and rest.” The adorable young girl noticed Jun Wu Xie’s line of sight, and smiled warmly.

Chapter 348: “Phoenix Academy (1)”

Jun Wu Xie lowered her eyes to look at the tiny form and picked the little black cat up to cradle in her arms. She then sat up to get out of bed.

Fei Yan gasped in shock and hurriedly got up to stop her. “You are not well enough yet!”

Jun Wu Xie was nevertheless insistent and when her feet touched the ground, a spinning wave of dizziness engulfed her and her body swayed and rocked. Fei Yan reached out wanting to hold her but Jun Wu Xie steadied herself and walked towards the door.

The sight that met her outside was rather sad to see. In the empty courtyard, the buildings were dilapidated and overgrown weeds grew out between the stone slabs on the path. The building she walked out of looked like she was in an academy but it was in a state of disrepair and seemed more abandoned than to be occupied by the young girl behind her and her Master.

Jun Wu Xie had heard about academies and many youths enrolled into academies after their ring spirits awoke to study under a Master. They would then learn everything about ring spirits and things about spiritual powers.

Jun Wu Xie should have been enrolled into an academy at her age, but the series of turmoil that rocked the Qi Kingdom had delayed her opportunity for these studies.

Wafting through the air in the courtyard, Jun Wu Xie detected the scent of wine. She raised her head and followed the scent to its source.

In a corner of the courtyard by the side of a lotus pond, a man spotting a full beard sat on a stone bench, pulling long swigs at the wine jar in his hand. Half of his face was covered by his beard but the red flushed complexion could be seen, and his eyelids were

lowered and drooped in drunkenness. What caught Jun Wu Xie's attention was behind the man instead, a withering lotus flower in a pond was filled with duckweed.

“Hey! You shouldn't move about so much! You're not well yet!” Fei Yan rushed over and saw Jun Wu Xie standing by the lotus pond. Fei Yan's gaze then turned to the bearded man at the side who was observing Jun Wu Xie in between swigs of the wine and said: “Master! He wouldn't listen, he insisted on coming out even though he's not recovered yet.”

The bearded man whom Fei Yan addressed as Master stared at Jun Wu Xie and waved his hand nonchalantly. “Let him have a look. This is his ring spirit after all, and it has turned into such a state. It is normal for him to be so worried.”

There was only a lone lotus in the pond, and that was a Snow Lotus. After the white robed man's devastating assault, the Snow Lotus had lost a big part of its vitality, and was unable to even morph into its human form. Its beautiful petals had shrunk and curled up tightly together, the edges of its petals had turned brown, and had lost almost all its glorious beauty from before.

Jun Wu Xie stared silently at the Snow Lotus and her face was expressionless. An hour later, she turned her head to look at the bearded man who had been observing her with interest all this while.

“Can it be saved?”

“Its essence and life force was greatly damaged, but cultivating it in this pond might still possibly save it. If it was forcefully moved, within two weeks, its essence would disappear and scatter into the winds.” The bearded man was direct and did not mince his words.

Jun Wu Xie frowned, and she lowered her head and looked at the little black cat in her arms, and remained silent.

“Instead of giving it all your concern, you should spare a thought

for yourself. Your injuries are rather severe and I heard from Qiao Chu that you guys encountered people from the Middle Realm. You used an exceptional technique to attack the opponent did you not?" The bearded man hesitated a moment before saying: "Do not be alarmed, I am the Master of Hua Yao and the others."

Jun Wu Xie looked at the bearded man and still did not say anything.

The bearded man looked helplessly at Jun Wu Xie's tiny face with its cold expression before he said: "Alright, if you do not want to talk about it, you don't need to. Deficiencies in the soul is hard to treat. You must be careful from now on."

Jun Wu Xie turned her eyes back to the Snow Lotus and asked: "You can save it?" She was unable to sense Little Lotus' and Drunk Lotus' spirit essence from the Snow Lotus, but she somehow felt that the lone Snow Lotus in the pond seemed to possess a tiny bit more vitality than it had on that fateful day.

Chapter 349: “Phoenix Academy (2)”

The bearded man raised an eyebrow. “It will live if you leave it in there.”

“Where are Hua Yao and Qiao Chu?” Jun Wu Xie asked next.

“Fei Yan, bring him to them.” The bearded man said as he pointed with his chin.

As he watched Jun Wu Xie’s departing back, the bearded man raised his eyebrow deep in thought and took another long pull on the jar of wine. As the wine went down burning his throat, his eyes turned to look at the Snow Lotus in the pond.

“A plant spirit..... No wonder they attracted the attention of people from the Twelve Palaces. Such a nourishing plant spirit at that. If the Higher Realm are to hear about this, it will surely bring about another bloodbath.” He muttered to himself, and laughed at the futility of the situation.

Fei Yan brought Jun Wu Xie back to the courtyard and led her towards a locked door. She was about to knock when the door opened up.

A charming youth with a gentle disposition stood behind the door. His smiling eyes were replaced by surprise when he suddenly saw Fei Yan and Jun Wu Xie outside and he said laughing a moment later: “You’re here to see them Fei Yan? And this must be the friend Brother Hua brought back with him.”

Fei Yan hopped up to stand beside the youth. At a glance, the two of them seemed to be almost the exact same height.

“That’s him. He just woke up and he insisted on getting out of bed. I couldn’t stop him, and Master told me to bring him to see Brother Hua and Qiao Chu.”

The youth smiled, and that smile’s radiance seemed to be able to put a field of flowers to shame.

The youth was about to go on when from within the room, a familiar voice called out.

“Little Xie is here? Wait! I haven’t got my pants on yet!!” Qiao Chu sounded panicked.

Fei Yan who was still by the door scoffed with a laugh: “Your stupidity might be contagious, please keep yourself well covered.”

The youth laughed melodiously and looked at Jun Wu Xie and said: “Please wait a moment. My name is Rong Ruo. I heard Qiao Chu calling you Little Xie, would you mind if I addressed you like that as well?”

Jun Wu Xie nodded slightly.

Rong Ruo suddenly looked at the sky and her eyes suddenly seemed distant.

“When Brother Hua and Qiao Chu brought you back to us that day, we were greatly shocked. The black snake ring spirit that sent all of you here that day soon died after reaching here, and just left behind a pile of snake bones. I buried them in the hill behind the academy.”

Jun Wu Xie did not reply. Her memory had stopped at the moment that Ye Sha had sacrificed himself. She could not recall anything that happened after that.

That black snake might be the ring spirit of the man dressed in black. When people die, their ring spirits disappear and do not leave behind a pile of bones like the black snake did. That was rather puzzling indeed.

After a while, Qiao Chu called out again from inside the room.

“It’s okay now! Come in!”

Rong Ruo invited Jun Wu Xie in, polite and gentle.

Jun Wu Xie walked into the room and saw two beds on each side of the room, with Hua Yao and Qiao Chu lying helplessly on each

one of them.

Half of Qiao Chu's face was still wrapped in bandages and he wore a loose robe. He grinned toothily at Jun Wu Xie and Hua Yao just sat in his bed quietly, looking in a slightly better condition than Qiao Chu. When Jun Wu Xie's gaze met his eyes, Hua Yao nodded in greeting but did not say anything.

"Carry it a moment." Jun Wu Xie turned suddenly and handed the unconscious cat over to Rong Ruo. Rong Ruo was puzzled and he exchanged a glance with Fei Yan, and both saw the questioning eyes in each other.

The black cat must matter a lot to Jun Xie. Why had he handed it to Rong Ruo and not Fei Yan, who was the first person Jun Xie had seen when he first woke up?

The two of them did not really understand it.

"Little Xie, you can really sleep. It has been three days before you finally woke up." Qiao Chu said with a laugh as he saw Jun Xie coming closer. With his every step, a wide smile was showing on that half of his face that was not covered.

Chapter 350: “Phoenix Academy (3)”

Jun Wu Xie walked towards Qiao Chu and stood by the side of his bed and without a word, she lifted the blanket that covered Qiao Chu.

Qiao Chu lay in the bed shocked.

Uncovered under the blanket, bloodied bandages and a variety of bottles of medicine lay, obviously hastily pushed together into a messy pile to be hidden under the blanket.

Jun Wu Xie’s eyes grew icy cold at the sight.

Qiao Chu gulped loudly and pulled the blanket back to cover the evidence completely.

“They had been thrown here for days and I was too lazy to dispose of them properly. Haha..... Ha.....” Qiao Chu laughed sheepishly.

Jun Wu Xie’s grabbed at Qiao Chu’s robe and opened it up widely. Under the robe, bloodied bandages covered most of his body, blood was still seeping through those bandages and the sight of them burned Jun Wu Xie’s eyes.

Qiao Chu gasped, but knew it was too late to hide his injuries. He did not move as he saw Jun Wu Xie’s face pale.

“Those..... will heal up..... real quickly.”

Jun Wu Xie ignored him and resolutely raised her head. She turned to Hua Yao who gave a long sigh helplessly before he opened up clothes in resignation and showed Jun Wu Xie his heavily bandaged upper body.

He had told the others earlier that Jun Xie was sure to find out.

“Scissors.” Jun Wu Xie asked in a chilly voice.

Qiao Chu had no choice but to dig into the mess on his bed and produced a pair of scissors, and handed it over, his heart heavy.

Jun Wu Xie held the scissors in her hand and with a few quick snips, skillfully cut the bandages away, exposing the countless wounds covering his whole body.

Jun Wu Xie's eyes narrowed.

"I'm... alright....." Seeing the intensity of the stare in Jun Xie's eyes, Qiao Chu quickly said, trying to appear nonchalant about it.

"I have a thick hide, and wounds of this degree don't matter much."

Qiao Chu's impishly handsome face was black and blue and blood still clotted on half of his face. The open wounds looked extremely garish.

The room fell deathly quiet. Qiao Chu's wounds and injuries were much worse than he was claiming them to be.

Rong Ruo and Fei Yan stood on one side, feeling very helpless. When those two had just returned that day, their injuries were no lighter than Jun Wu Xie's. It was just that Jun Wu Xie's injury was inflicted more upon her soul and the treatment would be a lot more complicated. Upon arrival to the academy, both had only made one statement, and fainted thereafter.

They had said.....

Save Jun Xie.

The two of them had not known who Jun Xie was, but it became clear when it was found that the two of them were still holding on tightly to Jun Wu Xie.

They had not expected that the trip to the Qing Yun Clan would make Hua Yao and Qiao Chu come back with such heavy injuries.

Jun Wu Xie did not say a word but just proceeded to bring out the medicine she had on her. She pried Qiao Chu's mouth open and started pouring it in.

Qiao Chu choked heavily in surprise and was about to protest

when he saw the chilly expression on Jun Wu Xie's face. He quickly swallowed back the words that had threatened to rush out his throat and just sat there quietly feeling sorry for himself.

After Qiao Chu swallowed the medicine, Jun Wu Xie started to work on his wounds.

Fei Yan and Rong Ruo just watched silently from the side at first, and when they saw that Qiao Chu had so speedily looked visibly better under Jun Wu Xie's quick movements, they were shocked speechless in awe.

"This..... is a little....." Fei Yan blinked her eyes repeatedly as her eyes began to glow with adoration for Jun Wu Xie.

Her treatment, made their Master's days of toil seem completely insignificant!

Rong Ruo nodded in agreement. Jun Wu Xie's almost magical skills in medicine really opened their eyes and opened new horizons.

After the wounds were tended to, Jun Wu Xie rebandaged Qiao Chu and immediately turned to walk towards Hua Yao's bed on the opposite side of the room.

Hua Yao eyed the bottle of medicine in Jun Wu Xie's hand and quickly said: "I'll do it myself."

Chapter 351: “Phoenix Academy (4)”

Hurriedly taking the bottle of medicine from Jun Wu Xie’s hand, Hua Yao emptied it into his mouth and removed the bandages completely from his body on his own accord. Sitting on the bed quietly, he surrendered his body over to Jun Wu Xie without a word.

Hua Yao’s injuries were a little different. Most of them were inflicted on his bones, and Jun Wu Xie spent a little more time tending to him but was speedy in her treatment just the same.

Right after Jun Wu Xie’s healing hands, Hua Yao and Qiao Chu seemed to have regained a bit of colour in their cheeks.

“Thank you.” Hua Yao said simply.

Jun Wu Xie replied by shaking her head and walked a little pale faced over to Rong Ruo, retrieving the little black cat back into her arms.

Seeing Jun Xie’s face turning white, Qiao Chu and Hua Yao were acutely aware that Jun Xie had not recovered much himself but had insisted on providing treatment for the two of them. Jun Xie might not have said anything about it but they understood his unspoken intent.

Jun Xie was thanking them for their unhesitating support in his very own way.

“Erm, Little Xie, you might as well stay here with us for awhile and return home only when you are feeling a little better.” Qiao Chu said suddenly.

“No rush.” Jun Wu Xie replied softly. Hua Yao’s Teacher had said that the pond here would be able to save Snow Lotus, and she was in no rush to leave.

Little Lotus had sacrificed an arm to save her life and had morphed into Drunk Lotus forcibly without the aid of alcohol. His

spiritual essence had then been greatly devastated by the white robed man. Jun Wu Xie did not know how to save Snow Lotus and if the bearded man could do it, Jun Wu Xie was willing to give up everything for it.

Jun Wu Xie was greatly troubled. After undergoing such a traumatic episode, she was forced to realise that this world was more complicated than she had imagined. The two mysterious men's power way surpassed them and even when Hua Yao and Qiao Chu had fully released their purple leveled spiritual powers, they were still not a match for the white robed man. Moreover, the grey robed man's powers had even been above the white robed man's.

Many powerful exponents existed in this world and might greater than the purple leveled spiritual powers were clearly out there. Before those overwhelming strengths, her poisons would not be effective enough.

Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes, and they flashed with a chill.

She had barely escaped this time, at the expense of the sacrifice of another person's life. If that black robed man had not appeared in the nick of time, and created an explosion with his own body, she would already be dead.

And next time?

Their enemies' target had been to capture her Snow Lotus and as long as the Snow Lotus stayed with her, she would definitely meet them again, and she might not be that lucky the next time!

She did not know why they wanted the Snow Lotus for, but she absolutely refused to remain a sitting duck.

She must become strong!

This must never, ever, happen again!

Jun Wu Xie stood up suddenly. Her earlier silence had quietened the other four people in the room and all four pairs of eyes looked

at her as she stood up.

“Bring me to where you buried the snake’s bones.” Jun Wu Xie said, looking at Rong Ruo.

Rong Ruo hesitated a moment but nodded his head after and he led Jun Wu Xie out of the room.

Within the room, Qiao Chu who had been trying his hardest to maintain a nonchalant front in Jun Wu Xie’s presence immediately slumped weakly into the bed.

The wounds on their bodies were more serious than what they had tried to portray. They had been fortunate to have received Jun Wu Xie’s miraculous treatment earlier, or they would have fallen into a dead faint by now.

“We’re really lucky to be still alive.” Qiao Chu said suddenly, as he lay on the bed weakly.

Remembering that fateful day, he had accepted that his life would end on that mountain.

“We cannot afford to die just yet.” Hua Yao stared blankly at the ceiling, and his eyes flashed with hatred briefly.

Fei Yan sighed heavily, and the brilliant smile disappeared from her face. “If you still remember the oath we took, you must treasure this life of yours. We will all die one day, but this is not the right place.”

Chapter 352: “I’m Here Now (1)”

In the hill behind the Phoenix Academy, a new unmarked grave lay. Beneath the soil, there was no body, but only a pile of broken snake bones.

Rong Ruo brought Jun Wu Xie to come before the unmarked grave. Jun Wu Xie stood before it and stared at the blank gravestone, her eyes expressionless.

Since her rebirth, her hands had been stained full of blood. To protect the Jun Family’s sanctity, and to ensure that the Lin Palace stood tall within the Kingdom of Qi, she had killed many people.

She did not kill the black robed man, but that man had died because of her.

Yet she could not even provide him with a decent burial as his body had blown to bits. Within this grave, there was only a pile of snake bones.

Jun Wu Xie owed him her life. Although he had done it under Jun Wu Yao’s orders to protect her, she felt responsible for his death.

To protect her, he had ended his own life.

Is this what loyalty is?

Jun Wu Xie stood before the unmarked grave for a long time, and the wind in the hills blew at her long dark hair. She raised her head and looked into the light rain that had started to fall, and the rain ran down her body, drenching her completely.

Her body turned cold, but was nothing compared to what her heart was feeling.

“Let’s go back first.” Rong Ruo looked at Jun Xie with sympathy. Jun Xie was still very weak and was now drenched in the cold rain. His petite frame might not be able to withstand it.

Jun Wu Xie did not reply and only continued to stare into the sky. The raindrops splattered on her face and ran into her eyes. The cold rain felt refreshing but the chill was beginning to seep into her bones.

“If I do not keep my eye on you, how much more torture would you put yourself under?” A deep enigmatic voice sounded suddenly.

Jun Wu Xie’s body stiffened and before she could turn her head, she was wrapped into a warm and familiar embrace.

Rong Ruo stared in shock at the man who had suddenly descended from the skies. Just like a god’s descent, soundless but impossible to mistake as anything else, as he could feel the overwhelming aura that the man gave out that drove unexplainable fear and dread deep into his heart and Rong Ruo found himself unable to get any closer.

“My darling, do not know how heart wrenching it is from me to see you like this?” The familiar voice came from right behind her and Jun Wu Xie just softly murmured: “Big brother?”

He turned Jun Wu Xie petite frame to face him and Jun Wu Yao’s perfectly handsome countenance reflected in her eyes.

The slight patter of the rain wet Jun Wu Yao’s jet black hair and flowed down the flawlessly attractive face, down the deep set grooves along the sharp and perfectly shaped features.

“My darling, you have nothing to fear now. I’m here now.” He hugged Jun Wu Xie tightly within his arms and comforted her in a soft voice.

Just a few months apart almost became an eternal parting. Jun Wu Yao’s eyes held tender cherishment for Jun Wu Xie, and hidden below that was an unbelievable rage and urge to murder.

No matter who it was, if they dared to inflict any harm on his dear little darling, they must be prepared to face his unimaginable

wrath.

It could have been that she was too tired, and it could be due to her serious injuries. Jun Wu Xie suddenly fell unconscious in his arms without another word.

Jun Wu Yao cradled her up in his arms and the air suddenly swirled around him forming a perfect sphere. The swirling air stream evaporated the rain from the two figures within the sphere and the rain did not penetrate any further, creating a magical sphere that kept the cold chilling rain off Jun Wu Xie.

With Jun Wu Xie in his arms, Jun Wu Yao leapt and flew straight to the Phoenix Academy.

Rong Ruo stood speechless in the rain as he stared at the departing figures, getting smaller in the distance, and only snapped back to his senses moments later after the figures disappeared.

“That man..... Is he from the Middle Realm?”

Realising the possibility, Rong Ruo was suddenly alarmed and the gentle expression faded from his face at that moment and rushed straight back to the Phoenix Academy.

Sitting lazily by the pond, and enjoying his wine sheltered from the cold rain, the bearded man was suddenly shocked when he felt an overpowering force approaching at an alarming speed. The lazy and carefree eyes suddenly steeled and glinted sharply!

Chapter 353: “I’m Here Now (2)”

Moving like a streak of lightning, a flash brought a strong gust of wind into the Phoenix Academy. Jun Wu Yao followed the trail of Jun Wu Xie’s lingering essence and came to a courtyard.

In the courtyard, a tall figure stood waiting in the rain.

Jun Wu Yao raised an eyebrow at the man who stood in his way and the corners of his mouth curled up in malicious murder.

Whoever dared appear before his eyes at that moment will only face death!

However, the bearded man in the courtyard stood as if struck by lightning when he saw Jun Wu Yao. His eyes widened in fear and he started to tremble uncontrollably. Just as Jun Wu Yao was about to raise his hand, the bearded man suddenly fell on one knee before Jun Wu Yao!

“My Lord!”

Jun Wu Yao narrowed his eyes. “Who are you?”

In the Lower Realm, there existed a person who recognised him?

“Palace of All Life, Yan Bu Gui.” The bearded man replied immediately.

Jun Wu Yao’s mouth curled into a malicious smile and a cloud of black mist formed below Yan Bu Gui, which suddenly lifted the kneeling figure up in mid air!

“Palace of Life of the Twelve Palaces. Good..... I was just thinking who in this Lower Realm was capable of harming my little darling.”

Yan Bu Gui turned pale at that moment and his veins popped up on that pale face.

“Jun Xie..... I did not hurt him.....” Yan Bu Gui squeezed out those words from his constricted throat in a panic and if he was a

moment slower, he would have died at that spot.

Jun Wu Yao frowned but the black mist threw Yan Bu Gui on the ground.

“Speak! Who did this?”

Ye Sha soul stone had broken and that had meant his demise. He was sent to protect Jun Wu Xie and Ye Sha’s sudden death had raised a sense of dread in Jun Wu Yao. He had dropped everything he was doing regardless of the consequences and rushed to the Qing Yun Clan immediately.

At the Cloudy Peaks, he only saw the Qing Yun Clan all ruined and he had followed Jun Wu Xie’s faint lingering essence and followed it to here to seek her out.

Only the Heavens knew, when he had seen Jun Wu Xie still safe and alive, his berserk mind frantic heart finally calmed. But when Jun Wu Xie had suddenly fainted in his arms, the murderous rage of tearing apart everything before him that had been suppressed for centuries broke free once again!

“It was people from the Palace of Flame Demons.....” Yan Bu Gui said, panting heavily.

“Palace of Flame Demons.....” The murder in Jun Wu Yao’s eyes rose and a black snake shot out from his sleeve, straight into Yan Bu Gui’s head.

Excruciating pain exploded in his head and Yan Bu Gui fell into spasms, sweating profusely.

The next moment, the pain completely disappeared without leaving a trace and Yan Bu Gui stood up, his face ashen and his body swaying.

“The Twelve Palaces are really getting more and more depraved, and they are now even committing such atrocities. Having managed to escape out of the Palace of Life alive was really fortunate for you.” The black snake had transmitted all the

information it had gleaned from Yan Bu Gui's head to Jun Wu Yao. He knew that Yan Bu Gui had not lied and besides that, he had found something else that was rather interesting.

“My gratitude to my Lord for sparing my lowly life.” Yan Bu Gui did not harbour any resentment but was just thankful that he was still alive.

The man before him, had never hesitated to kill. The number of people who managed to remain alive after Jun Wu Yao's intent to kill was incited, were few and far between.

Yan Bu Gui cast a quick glance at Jun Xie who was still tightly held in Jun Wu Yao's arms, and it dawned on him.

Jun Wu Yao must have spared his life on account that he saved Jun Xie. If that had not happened, he would be a cold lifeless corpse now.

On the other hand, his heart turned cold at the other reality.

The Lord was still alive.....

The Middle Realm faced an imminent all encompassing bloodbath, the impending doom of the Twelve Palaces now hung heavily over their heads.

Chapter 354: I'm Here Now (3)

“Mind what you say.” Jun Wu Yao threw an unmistakable warning and carried Jun Wu Xie into her room.

Rong Ruo appeared moments later and was shocked when he saw Yan Bu Gui standing pale faced, completely drenched in the rain.

“Master!”

Yan Bu Gui raised a hand and shook his head. “No matter what you saw, do not breathe a word about it to anyone. He is not a man we can afford to offend.”

The Dark Emperor was still alive and if the Dark Realm were to find out, they would most certainly receive their revered Emperor back to lead them readily. But..... why was the Dark Lord remaining here in the Lower Realm? What had actually happened at that time? News of the Dark Lord's demise had spread throughout the realm then, how did he come to be here in the Lower Realm?

Yan Bu Gui held his confused mind in his hands and he suddenly laughed.

“Hahaha! The Twelve Palaces are as good as dead now.”

The Dark Lord's black snake had the ability to delve into a person's mind and know everything the person knew. The Dark Lord knew that Yan Bu Gui had indeed broken away from the Palace of Life, that also meant..... he knew about that other matter as well.

Rong Ruo stared at Yan Bu Gui who had suddenly laughed out loud in consternation, but he decided to remain silent.

.....

When Jun Wu Xie woke up, she saw a familiar face before her. Her cold eyes blinked a few times before she became fully awake.

“Next time, don’t do such dangerous things.” Jun Wu Yao lay on the side of the bed, his hand propping up his head, as he said smilingly.

While Jun Wu Xie was unconscious, he had checked on her soul. He found that the once intact soul had become extremely weak. Jun Wu Xie had not sustains much external wounds but her body was currently very weak. And that weakness stemmed from the deficiency in her soul. Wounds on the body were easier to heal but injuries to the soul.....

Jun Wu Yao narrowed his eyes as he went deep in thought, but realising that Jun Wu Xie was watching him, he wiped those worries away from his face.

“He died for me.” Jun Wu Xie sat up. “And I didn’t even know his name.”

Jun Wu Yao shifted and sat up on the side of the bed, and in his hand, he was suddenly holding some snake bones within his palm .

“My darling wants him revived?”

Jun Wu Xie stared at the pieces of snake bone in Jun Wu Yao’s hand and her eyes glinted. Rong Ruo had said that the black snake that had sent them back here had left a pile of snake bones behind after its death. Jun Wu Xie did not see the bones, but she was quite certain the pieces in Jun Wu Yao’s hand were the same ones that Rong Ruo was talking about.

Noticing Jun Wu Xie’s eyes, Jun Wu Yao clenched his hand and a black mist engulfed the bones. The bones extended and grew, gradually taking the shape of a human.

Little by little, the shape gathered and took on its form. A man dressed in all black suddenly appeared in the room. His eyes were closed and his face looked exactly the same as the man who had blown himself up to save her days ago!

Jun Wu Xie watched without a word. The black robed man

opened his eyes, his irises were just a slit like a snake's.

“From now onwards, you are named Ye Sha.” Jun Wu Yao said to the man in black.

“Yes! My Lord!” Ye Sha fell on one knee, his face expressionless.

Jun Wu Yao raised his head and turned to Jun Wu Xie, his face beaming widely.

“Ye Sha, was and is his name.”

Jun Wu Xie closed her eyes, stroking the little black cat in her arms.

That's not him.....

He looked the same and Jun Wu Xie could even feel the same aura emanating from the man. But the Ye Sha before her was still not the same Ye Sha who had protected her so selflessly in the Cloudy Peaks.

Jun Wu Yao noticed Jun Wu Xie's reaction. She had not said anything, and neither had she made any expressions. But he knew exactly what Jun Wu Xie was feeling at that moment.

“Ye Sha's soul is gathered from the same snake bones left behind. He has been reborn, and this is both Ye Sha, and not Ye Sha at the same time.”

Chapter 355: “I’m Here Now (4)”

The reborn Ye Sha had no memories of the past, and only knew one thing. Absolute loyalty to Jun Wu Yao.

Jun Wu Yao commanded Ye Sha to continue his protection of Jun Wu Xie in secret.

“You know where those people who attacked me were from?” Jun Wu Xie stared at Jun Wu Yao inquiringly, as she had always felt that he knew everything.

Jun Wu Yao’s face turned chilly. “Middle Realm, Palace of Flame Demons.”

“Middle Realm?” Jun Wu Xie queried further. She had heard the term “Lower Realm” many times, and now Jun Wu Yao was saying there is a “Middle Realm”. What did all this different realms mean?

Jun Wu Yao noticed Jun Wu Xie’s puzzled look of confusion and patiently explained: “Under these Heavens, there are a total of three realms. The different realms are divided by their powers into the Higher Realm, Middle Realm, and the Lower Realm. The Lower Realm is where my little darling is from, and the people who attacked you are from the Middle Realm. Do you still remember when I mentioned Spirit Devour?”

Jun Wu Xie nodded.

“The Spirit Devour technique is not known to the people of the Lower Realm as it was discovered only by the people in the Middle Realm. To enhance the powers of their own ring spirits, they pursued all kind of ways eyeing the ring spirits of others. Devouring different kinds of spirits brought different kinds of effects and influences. And among all the ring spirits, the most highly sought were the revered plant ring spirits.” Jun Wu Yao narrowed his eyes as those thoughts went through his head. They

dared set their eyes on his little darling..... They did not have enough lives to pay for this debt....

“Plant ring spirits possess extremely strong self healing powers and if devoured, they speed up the pace of development in their growth, hence plant ring spirits become the most prized target. Alas, the existence of plant ring spirits were also extremely rare and they were no signs to show that they had awoken. People have lived their whole lives without even being aware that their plant ring spirits awoke.”

Under the relentless persecution of all plant ring spirits from the Twelve Palaces, those people who were ignorant about the plant ring spirit's awakening and were able to live out their lives in peace were fortunate in a twisted sort of reasoning.

“The Palace of Flame Demons are aware of your plant ring spirit now that you've escaped from them, and they will send great numbers of their people down to the Lower Realm to search.” Jun Wu Yao's eyes were almost glowing like lit embers with a wicked smile on his lips. The lure of a plant ring spirit was too irresistible and they would pay any price to locate Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie looked at Jun Wu Yao and realised that everything Jun Wu Yao was saying coincided with those two strange and extremely powerful men's persistence in killing her in the Cloudy Peaks.

If Ye Sha had not intervened and sacrificed himself to save her, she would have lost her life in those mountains.

“Their powers are beyond a purple leveled spirit.”

Jun Wu Yao continued on: “The purple level spirit is only the peak for the people of the Lower Realm.”

Jun Wu Xie's eyes were cold. The fact that she was targeted by such people was bad news to her.

If they were pour all their efforts into the search for her, it was

highly likely that she would be found. She did not have much time left, and she needed to raise her powers quickly.

What happened that day, must never be repeated!

“If the Palace of Flame Demons were to cease to exist, then no one would ever know that a plant ring spirit exists in the Lower Realm.” Jun Wu Xie raised her head to say. She wiped out the Qing Yun Clan, she would do the same with the Palace of Flame Demons!

If plant ring spirits were so precious and rare, the two men from the Palace of Flame Demons would not reveal to the other palaces that a plant ring spirit existed in the Lower Realm. If the Palace of Flame Demons was annihilated, she would then be safe.

Jun Wu Yao laughed out loud after hearing Jun Wu Xie.

Annihilate the Palace of Flame Demons? His little darling had a rather big appetite for destruction.

“To annihilate the Palace of Flame Demons, the first thing you must do is to breakthrough to the purple spirit. Anyone in the Lower Realm has to breakthrough their spirit powers to the purple level before they can enter the Middle Realm.”

“Purple spirit?” Jun Wu Xie asked, her eyes narrowed. Her vengeance against the Palace of Flame Demons would be exacted sooner or later!

Chapter 356: “I’m Here Now (5)”

“Before that is achieved Wu Xie, you cannot go back.” Jun Wu Yao said suddenly.

Jun Wu Xie raised her head to look at Jun Wu Yao. When Jun Wu Yao had said go back, he had meant the Lin Palace!

She can’t go back?

Why?

“Your soul is no longer complete. You must have used an attack that utilised and burned up your soul. If your opponent still lives, he can use that piece of your soul and trace it back to you and find out your location.” Jun Wu Yao explained in all seriousness as he looked at Jun Wu Xie. He had not expected Jun Wu Xie to use her own soul to carry out an attack, as the price for such an attack carried too heavy a price.

Jun Wu Xie’s eyes widened in surprise.

When she had used her soul to strike at the opponent with the black beast, she had fully intended to kill him with it. If Little Lotus had not forcibly intervened, she might have perished together with the little black cat and the white robed man. Due to the forced termination of her attack where she burned her soul to achieve, it was possible that she might have left bits of her soul within the body of the white robed man.

Had he died then?

Jun Wu Xie could not be certain. Although Ye Sha had dealt a devastating and deadly blow to the white robed man that day, when it came to the people of the Middle Realm whom she knew nothing about, Jun Wu Xie did not dare underestimate them.

Jun Wu Yao had only painted half the picture with his words, but Jun Wu Xie knew what the other half comprised.

If she were to return to the Lin Palace, the people from the Palace of Flame Demons would find her there. And Jun Xian and Jun Qing would sacrifice everything to shield her and the whole of the Lin Palace will fall!

She had set her heart so strongly on returning, but the way home had been cut off mercilessly. Home had become a place she longed for but was unable to return to.....

Jun Wu Xie suddenly felt her heart wince, that brought about a dull ache. She was already weak and now, her face turned even more pale.

Jun Wu Yao came to stand beside Jun Wu Xie, and brought her deep into his embrace.

“Do not worry. You will return one day. I will find a way to make your soul complete again.” Jun Wu Yao patted Jun Wu Xie on the back comforting her, like coaxing a frightened child to calm and sleep.

It had been a miscalculation on his part this time. He had known that the Qing Yun Clan had links to one of the palaces, but he had not expected them to bump right into Jun Wu Xie.

“Before that, you can stay here in this academy for the time being. This place is rather special, and it can block out and contain the essence of your soul from being detected.” Jun Wu Yao reassured in a soft voice.

This place had been used by Yan Bu Gui to hide himself all this time. All their members had a marked Soul Badge with the Twelve Palaces and in any instances of betrayal or desertion, they could be traced with the Soul Badge no matter how far they hid, and killed. To have found a place like this, Yan Bu Gui must have spent quite a bit of effort.

“Here?” Jun Wu Xie raised her head in query.

“Yes. Don’t you need to leave the Snow Lotus here to recover as

well? Take it as accompanying the little guy as well,” Jun Wu Yao knew very well, how deep Jun Wu Xie’s feelings were for the Jun Family’s father and son. Everything that she had so far, could be all linked to her want to protect the Jun Family’s father and son. She would have liked nothing more than to return home and reunite with them, but the Palace of Flame Demons had suddenly appeared and burned up any hope of satisfying that longing.

Jun Wu Xie kept silent. A home she could not return to, that stifling feeling of repression made it somehow harder to breathe. But at the same time, it strongly reminded her of everything that had happened in the Cloudy Peaks that day.

She would never allow that to happen in the Lin Palace!

She nodded without a word, and made her decision then.

“The day will come, after I annihilate the Palace of Flame Demons, and go home proudly.” She raised her eyes and her eyes were filled with resolve and determination.

Jun Wu Yao laughed as he heard her proclamation, and his arms tightened around Jun Wu Xie.

He knew that Jun Wu Xie was not so easily beaten.

Chapter 357: “Discipleship (1)”

It was early the next morning when Jun Wu Xie awoke. Jun Wu Yao had disappeared once again and she walked outside. Ye Sha appeared before her.

“Miss.”

Jun Wu Xie stared at the familiar yet at the same time unfamiliar face in silence.

“Master Wu Yao has left to seek something. Please do not worry and wait here for a period.” Ye Sha said stoically.

Jun Wu Xie was thoughtful for a short moment before she guessed what Jun Wu Yao was seeking for.

He had mentioned yesterday that he would find a way to heal her soul to become complete again, but an incomplete soul was not that easily mended and what could have made Jun Wu Yao leave to seek can only be something that can heal her.

Jun Wu Xie felt a sudden warmth spread from her heart and only nodded to Ye Sha. Ye Sha then disappeared and his presence was completely erased in a moment.

The previous Ye Sha had done the same thing, protecting her in silence, and unnoticed.

Jun Wu Xie turned her attention back to the present and walked further outside. If she was not able to return to the Lin Palace, she had other plans in mind.

In the garden, Yan Bu Gui sitting on the stone bench, with a wine jar in hand, while he observed Fei Yan and Rong Ruo sparring each other. Right beside him, Hua Yao and Qiao Chu who were still rather weak stood. They had not recovered enough from their injuries to undergo any intensive training.

The two figures moved quickly in their battle, their speed an

incessant blur, their actions too fast to be captured by the eye.

As Jun Wu Xie approached, she was watching the match between Fei Yan and Rong Ruo and she realised that the power of those two were in no way inferior to Hua Yao and Qiao Chu.

At such a young age and to possess such power, it was surely startling to many people.

“Little Xie?” Qiao Chu spotted Jun Wu Xie approaching immediately and he zipped right up to her without a moment’s hesitation.

“You came here just at the right time. The match between Fei Yan and Rong Ruo is just heating up. Don’t miss the show.” Qiao Chu had reached out to pull Jun Wu Xie, but he suddenly retracted his hand.

Jun Wu Xie nodded anyway, and followed Qiao Chu into the garden.

Hua Yao and Jun Wu Xie nodded in greeting.

Yan Bu Gui was trying to observe Jun Wu Xie discreetly when he found the cold eyes looking right at him. Yan Bu Gui immediately averted his eyes and kept them on the match in front of him.

Jun Wu Xie turned and asked Qiao Chu who was beside her: “How do I enroll into Phoenix Academy?”

Qiao Chu was enjoying himself thoroughly watching the match when Jun Wu Xie’s query made him turn with his eyes widened, and stared at Jun Wu Xie in disbelief.

“Wha..... What did you say?”

“I want to train myself here.” Jun Wu Xie disregarded Qiao Chu’s shocked expression, and said with an expressionless face.

“.....” Qiao Chu’s mouth moved, but no words came out.

What did he just hear?

Jun Wu Xie wanted to stay here at the Phoenix Academy?

Even Hua Yao's face registered shock at Jun Wu Xie's statement.

"Are you sure?" Qiao Chu finally recovered and asked again.

Jun Wu Xie nodded.

Qiao Chu's face broke into an impossibly wide smile at that moment!

"That's just great! You can be our Master's disciple! He's really good!"

Qiao Chu could not hold in his excitement and literally pushed Jun Wu Xie to come stand before Yan Bu Gui. Yan Bu Gui was just taking a long draw at his wine jar when he was almost choked to death by his moronic disciple's actions!

Even if he did not know what relationship this kid had with the Lord, he saw how protective the Lord was of him. This kid held a rather special place in the Lord's heart.

If he were to accept the kid as a disciple.....

Just thinking about it made his blood turn cold.

But Jun Wu Xie was already standing before Yan Bu Gui and she had already toyed with the idea when she saw Hua Yao's and Qiao Chu's powers. In order to grow stronger, she must cherish every opportunity before her.

Before Yan Bu Gui could utter a single word of protest, Jun Wu Xie said: "Your disciple Jun Xie, pays his greetings to Master."

Chapter 358: “Discipleship (2)”

The mouthful of wine in Yan Bu Gui’s mouth sprayed out fully onto Qiao Chu as he choked heavily.

Qiao Chu was stunned.

“Cough, cough, cough..... What did you just say?” Yan Bu Gui asked, his eyes wide in horror, as he stared in disbelief at Jun Wu Xie.

What did he just call him?

Master!?

Yan Bu Gui shivered and every strand of hair on him stood. He looked around frantically for any signs of a merciless Lord.

“Master.” Jun Wu Xie repeated calmly as she stared at the flustered Yan Bu Gui.

Yan Bu Gui only sat trembling uncontrollably, his face flushed and was unable to speak a single word.

Qiao Chu wiped at his face vigorously to remove the wine sprayed over him and gave his Master a forlorn look.

“Master, Little Xie might still be very young but he is really amazing! Don’t reject him like this.” Qiao Chu said indignantly. Yan Bu Gui had only four disciples and the circumstances that brought about their discipleship were extremely unusual. Whether Yan Bu Gui would accept Jun Xie was not known to them.

If it was anybody else, it would not have bothered Qiao Chu so much. But he already saw Jun Xie as someone almost like a brother and he wished for Jun Xie to study under the same Master as them.

Yan Bu Gui was shivering though there was no chill.

Accept Jun Xie as a disciple? He treasured that fact that his head was still attached to his body.

But asking him to reject Jun Xie was just as horrific for him.

If the Dark Emperor knew that Yan Bu Gui dared to reject Jun Xie as a disciple, his fate would not turn out any better.

And if he accepted Jun Xie as a disciple..... ARGHHH!!

Yan Bu Gui would meet with an insufferable fate whichever way he chose.

After hesitating for a long while, Yan Bu Gui suddenly stood up. Fei Yan and Rong Ruo stopped their match and turned their heads to watch their Master.

“Let me think about it.” Yan Bu Gui escaped in a hurry from the garden, unable to make himself stay a single moment more.

The terror in his heart did not allow him to make a decision as a wrong move would need him to pay back in with his blood.

He did not accept, and neither did he reject. The situation frustrated Qiao Chu as he knew that Jun Xie would make an exceptional disciple for his Master. Besides the fact that Jun Xie’s personality was rather queer, he did not see anything else that was wrong.

“Little Xie, don’t worry. Let Master think about it a moment. He has always been rather cautious about accepting disciples.” Qiao Chu was afraid that Jun Xie’s ego might be pricked and he tried to comfort him.

Jun Wu Xie’s face was nevertheless calm and did not seem affected in the least. She was never easily swayed whenever she decided on something. From her perspective, whoever was able to produce disciples like Qiao Chu and Hua Yao had a certain level of ability, and it was only normal that they were a little temperamental.

Rong Ruo looked at Jun Wu Xie. He had almost wanted to open his mouth to say something but finally decided against it. The others did not know the reason, but he knew it only too well.

The man who had brought Jun Xie back to the academy the other day was someone that even Yan Bu Gui was afraid to offend. Yan Bu Gui's current dilemma must have something to do with that man.

Silence filled the garden. Suddenly, several shouts sounded and the faces of Qiao Chu and his other three fellow disciples turned weary.

"They are here again! When will this end?" Qiao Chu remarked as his shoulders slumped.

No sooner than he had finished his statement, a group of youths dressed in uniforms barged in, shouting at the group.

"Qiao Chu! How many days has it been? That little brat that you guys brought in the other day is still staying here!?" The leader of the group of youths wasn't very tall and his face showed great displeasure. He stared at Jun Wu Xie, who was standing next to Qiao Chu, his eyes full of disdain.

Jun Wu Xie looked coldly at the arrogant youth and saw the similar looks of disdain the other youths in the group gave them.

"Cough, it's just a few days. Do you need to be so pushy?" Qiao Chu asked exasperated.

The leader of the youths widened his eyes in anger and pointed at Qiao Chu's nose screaming: "Just a few days!? Do you know by having one more person around, how much more it will cost us every single day!? Food, clothes, use, lodge. All of that costs money! The East Wing had always been owing and in deficit and it had been for at least a year now! You guys then decided to take in another freeloader and it seems he isn't going to pay up either!"

Chapter 359: “I Did It. So? (1)”

The Phoenix Academy did not have a large campus and decades ago, it was a fairly prosperous academy. But a huge fire had suddenly broken out then and claimed all the lives of the disciples and teachers. Overnight, the highly sought academy by many youths throughout the lands was left in ruins. Although people had subsequently given money for the academy to be rebuilt later, but the academy's glorious past did not return.

The present Phoenix Academy had four wings and the total students totaled just around a hundred. Compared to the many academies that easily boasted a thousand students, the Phoenix Academy was deemed to be pathetic.

After the Phoenix Academy had just been rebuilt, the academy did not have a single student for three whole years. The lengthy lull had made many reputable teachers leave for other academies. And to ensure the survival of the Phoenix Academy, the headmaster of the academy was forced to further lower the criteria for enrollment.

From initially being only open to the talented, they had lowered the criteria to accept anyone and everyone who had the ability to pay the fees into the Phoenix Academy now.

The Phoenix Academy only had four teachers and they were in charge of the four separate wings of the compass' directions, namely North, East, South and West. The headmaster was a person who had great greed for money. Any as long as the students were able to pay up, he did not care much about anything else.

Many of their students were from ordinary families, or untalented sons from rich families who were rejected by prestigious schools and just shoved into the Phoenix Academy to just pass time.

Yan Bu Gui was one of the Teachers of the Phoenix Academy, and

was in charge of the East Wing. And the number of students enrolled within the East Wing came up to a grand total of four. They were namely Qiao Chu, Hua Yao, Fei Yan and Rong Ruo. If it was not for the low numbers for the Phoenix Academy's enrollment, they would not have even allowed Yan Bu Gui to occupy the East Wing with just his four disciples.

They occupied the premises, and the monies due were expected in return from them.

But.....

Jun Wu Xie's gaze fell on the four disciples of the East Wing. The two times she had met Qiao Chu, he had been dressed in tattered clothes and all his clothes had been full of patches. Hua Yao's clothes might have been neater and cleaner, but the fabric was thinned from repeated washing and she had deduced that their financial situation was not in good shape.

From the shouts of the aggressive youth before them, she gathered that Hua Yao and the rest had not paid a single cent towards their fees owing to the academy. And the headmaster had repeatedly sent people here to hound them for repayment, but had been suppressed by Yan Bu Gui many times.

But the situation today, seemed to be a tad bit unsuppressable.

"The headmaster had given his ultimatum! If you still cannot pay up, you must pack up and scam immediately! Do not think for a moment you can still depend on Yan Bu Gui to shield you all any longer! The headmaster is feeling very displeased with him and he might not stay here much longer himself!" The leader of the youths blasted his mouth off mixed with a series of curses.

Jun Wu Xie watched quietly from the side and saw that the youth's spiritual powers was merely at the bottom of the red level, but Qiao Chu and the others were allowing themselves to be berated and verbally abused.

She wasn't sure of Fei Yan's and Rong Ruo's powers, but she was fairly certain that they were definitely comparable to Qiao Chu and Hua Yao.

With their highly capable skills, defeating those youths before them would be a piece of cake. But why were they not moving at all?

Jun Wu Xie could not understand it at all. To her, in all her lack of knowledge of the intricacies of the human to human interaction, only one point stood out. If people do not oppose her, she did not harm them. If anyone went against her, she would pay them back a hundred times back.

The arrogance and domineering attitude from group of youths against the silent quartet had gone overboard.

“What a bunch of shameless dogs. They themselves are in debt owing their fees towards the academy and they insist on continuing to freeload here. They even had the cheek to bring back more trash, thinking this is some shelter for homeless strays and beggars?” The leader of the youths turned to pick on Jun Wu Xie, when he saw the skinny petite figure of a boy, and did not deem Jun Wu Xie to be a threat.

Chapter 360: "I Did It. So? (2)"

Qiao Chu and the others clenched their jaws tight, their hands closed tightly into fists, but did not say a single word.

They had been cursed like this many times before, and they could do nothing but restrain themselves and suffer their abuse.

"Give us a few more days please." Rong Ruo finally pleaded, his voice amicable.

Who would have expected that the leader of the youths suddenly spat on Rong Ruo's face! "Even if we were to give you months, you guys would never be able to come up with a single cent! Get out of the Phoenix Academy! We do not want beggars like you here!"

At that moment, a change came over the expressions on the faces of the four of them. Qiao Chu tensed up and he stepped forward in unsuppressable rage. However, he had taken only one step when Rong Ruo held his shoulders and shook his head.

"Oh? What was that? You want to hit me don't you?" The youth stared at Qiao Chu, his face sneering with contempt.

He was thinking back to the countless times he had done this to them, and every single time, the beggars of the East Wing had not dared to retaliate.

Qiao Chu clenched his fists so hard his palms were bleeding. If not for Yan Bu Gui's orders, he would have torn that sneering face apart.

Alas, before the youths' leader could revel in the cheers that erupted from his companions, a heavy punch landed right on his face and he found himself suddenly flying through the air!

All eyes turned to the person who threw the punch.

Jun Wu Xie was still carrying the unconscious little black cat in one arm, while the other arm was still fixed in mid air. Her cold

expressionless face showed no emotion, but those eyes flared with chilling murder!

“Little Xie.....” Qiao Chu’s rage disappeared like a deflated balloon at that moment and he stared speechlessly at Jun Xie, a mix of emotions going through him.

The youth who had flown was hurriedly helped up by the other youths in between his groaning as he held his hand to his swollen face, his eyes staring in anger at Jun Wu Xie.

“A beggar like you dares to hit me!? You must be tired of living! All of you! Take him down!” The youths’ leader shouted in rage, and the other youths surrounding him all jumped towards Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie’s eyes narrowed dangerously and shoved the little black cat into Hua Yao’s arms. Her agile body suddenly glowed a bright orange and she charged straight into the midst of the attacking youths!

The bigger youths had expected themselves to be able to easily take down the puny little brat and had charged in headlong without fear. And when that orange glow had surfaced suddenly on the brat, shock registered visibly on all those youths’ eyes!

WHAT?

That puny brat was a orange leveled spirit?

It was already too late for them to stop their forward momentum and an orange light flashed among them and all the youths suddenly fell back covered in injuries!

It had only been a blink of an eye, but those same youths who had been arrogant and contemptuous just a moment ago were now all lying upon the ground in tears, groaning in pain. The anger and arrogance on the face of the youths’ leader soon faded and his eyes widened in fear at the slowly approaching figure of Jun Wu Xie.

“You.... What do you want!? I..... I am the head student leader of

the South Wing..... Don't you dare harm me or.....”

‘BAM!’

Before the youth could finish, Jun Wu Xie threw another punch on his face and grabbed at his collar with her other hand before he was blasted away by the force!

Following that, with his collar tightly held and his head still spinning from Jun Wu Xie punch, he wanted to protest but Jun Wu Xie's brutal fist was already on his face and the merciless punches made his already unattractive face swell and contort into a bloody mess.

They other youths did not dare move and just remained rooted to their spots in shock staring wordlessly at Jun Wu Xie's thrashing, with mouths wide open.

It was brutal! Too brutal!

Stop him! Or someone would end up dead!

Chapter 361: "I Did It. So? (3)"

The youth was already too weakened to even make any noise and the other youths were too shocked by the sight to even move.

Even Qiao Chu and the others were in shock.

That sudden attack was..... simply brutal!

Rong Ruo snapped back to reality suddenly and whispered urgently to Qiao Chu: "We cannot allow Jun Xie to pummel at him anymore, or the consequences will be really dire."

Qiao Chu realised what Rong Ruo was saying and rushed up to put his hand between Jun Wu Xie and the heavily pummeled youth. "Little Xie, that's enough." Qiao Chu looked at Jun Xie, his eyes gentle. Jun Xie was protecting the four of them.

They could not fight back and Jun Xie had done it for them.

He could not find the right words to say at that moment and his emotions just surged wildly within him.

Jun Wu Xie's fist was still held up and the orange glow still swirled around it. Her whole fist was already covered in blood as she raised her head to look at Qiao Chu. She held the unconscious youth a moment longer before she dropped him to let him fall to the ground in a heap. She turned to the terrified youths around her and simply said: "Scram."

The youths immediately picked up their unconscious companion and ran away with their tails between their legs.

None of them had expected that the spineless cowards in the East Wing who had always not dared to put up any retaliation no matter how much they were bullied would suddenly house such an unreasonable and obnoxious little tyrant. That puny sized brat had charged straight into them and thrashed all of them up, not giving them any opportunity to even speak up.

After those youths had left, the air in the courtyard hung with a faint smell of blood and the place was suddenly quiet.

Qiao Chu sniffled his nose and suppressed his emotions. Without a word, he held up Jun Wu Xie's bloodied hand and wiped off the blood carefully with the corner of his tattered shirt.

"Why would you hit them? They have now dirtied your hands."

"Felt like it." Jun Wu Xie said calmly, as the murder in her eyes diminished.

Qiao Chu sniffled again and did not say anything else. Only after wiping Jun Wu Xie's hand clean, Qiao Chu looked up again at Jun Wu Xie, but did not say anything but only scratched at his own head.

Jun Wu Xie turned and walked towards Rong Ruo and handed him a hanky.

Rong Ruo was surprised a moment before he accepted it and muttered his thanks softly as he wiped the spit from his face.

"That felt great." Hua Yao carried the little black cat and came before Jun Wu Xie, returning the unconscious cat back into her arms.

Jun Wu Xie carried the black cat in her arms and lowered her eyes. Those eyes were now calm and tranquil, completely unlike what they saw just moments ago, brutal and murderous.

"I swear, if Qiao Chu had not stopped Jun Xie earlier, Liu Chan would surely be dead now." Fei Yan whispered softly into Rong Ruo's ears.

Jun Xie's body was small and skinny, and he did not speak much. But her temperament was something else. She spoke with her fists, simple and straightforward.

Rong Ruo stared at Jun Xie thoughtfully, a smile playing at the corners of his mouth.

She's rather..... nice.

“Whoa! What mischief have you brats been up to again!?” Yan Bu Gui who had just left them just moments ago was led to come back after hearing the ruckus. When he saw Jun Wu Xie standing in the middle of his four disciples, he stopped in his tracks. But the faint smell of blood in the air did not escape him and he scanned his eyes around, seeing the splatters of blood just outside the entrance to the courtyard.

“Teacher, Liu Chan brought people from the South Wing here again.” Qiao Chu stiffened up when he saw Yan Bu Gui and he replied honestly to the query.

Yan Bu Gui frowned slightly, but his bushy beard covered much of his face and they could not read his expression.

“You retaliated?” Yan Bu Gui’s voice suddenly turned chilled.

Qiao Chu opened his mouth slightly and stopped. He then lowered his head and muttered in a low voice: “They were extremely rude to Rong Ruo and I could not hold myself back.”

Qiao Chu heaped all responsibility for it upon himself.

Yan Bu Gui’s eyes steeled and a flash of light burst from his hand, hitting Qiao Chu on his chest, the blast throwing him across the courtyard.

“I warned you guys so many times! You are not to lay a finger on the other disciples of the Phoenix Academy! Did my words not get into your head!?”

Chapter 362: “I Did It. So? (4)”

Yan Bu Gui strode quickly over and stood before Qiao Chu, his hand raised.

In the courtyard, Hua Yao and the others lowered their heads unable to watch.

Yan Bui Gui's raised hand remained in the air and did not lower.

Jun Wu Xie held Yan Bu Gui's hand back with her eyes. The small faced looked up at Yan Bu Gui, her eyes biting cold.

“I did it. It was me.” She said curtly.

Yan Bu Gui hesitated.

“If you seek to punish, it should be me.” Jun Wu Xie said, narrowing her eyes.

Yan Bu Gui looked at Jun Wu Xie, the anger fading from him. He retrieved his raised hand turned to walk away. He took two steps and turned back as if to say something but could not find the right words.

But Jun Wu Xie had something to say instead.

“I take back my words.” Jun Wu Xie said suddenly.

Yan Bu Gui waited silently for her to continue.

“A Master like you doesn't deserve me to be your disciple.” Jun Wu Xie said coldly. She saw very clearly what Qiao Chu and the rest of them had to put up with. She had never had a master but she knew that as a master, if they could not protect their own disciples and instead expected them to swallow the pride and rage when they suffered under the humiliation countless times and not allowed to fight back.....

That clearly showed the incompetence of the master!

A master like that, however powerful, did not deserve her

respect!

Yan Bu Gui remained silent. He stared at Jun Wu Xie and that cold face and that chilly expression. Those eyes were frosty as they stared at him and he felt as though he was sinking in an icy lake, its waters crystal clear.

Qiao Chu and the others were shocked beyond words.

Jun Wu Xie turned to walk away but Yan Bu Gui suddenly spoke: “A master like me? What did that mean?”

Jun Wu Xie stared at Yan Bu Gui with the same frosty eyes and said: “As a master, if they cannot protect their disciples, and allow their disciples to suffer humiliation and endless bullying from others, a master like that, I’ll rather do without.”

Jun Wu Xie’s voice was soft, but every single word of hers struck at the heart.

Yan Bu Gui narrowed his eyes, but his bushy beard hid his expression on his face.

Qiao Chu quickly reacted then and stood before Jun Wu Xie. “Little Xie! You’ve misunderstood! Things are not what they seem to be! Our master..... he is doing all this to protect us!”

Jun Wu Xie turned to Qiao Chu and said coldly: “If I’m constantly oppressed by people like those, and am forced to bear and grin it, even if I were to achieve what I wanted in the end, that would be no victory and I would get no satisfaction from it. To live, you live gloriously. Even if the skies fall, the back must never bend! Arrogance can be done without, but pride must never sway!” Forbearance did not mean to bear up under merciless bullying and character building did not mean getting beaten down all the time.

Jun Wu Xie might have been locked up in a room for more than a decade and had no freedom, constantly bombarded and forced by that demon’s ideals throughout that period, Jun Wu Xie had never bowed down to him and never allowed a moment’s humiliation

from it.

Even if her bones crushed, her back would remain straight till the last moment!

Jun Wu Xie's words drove a shock through Qiao Chu and made Yan Bu Gui seemingly thoughtful.

Living like dogs and subjected to the abuse and humiliation of anyone that wanted to, was that a life worth living?

Maybe, the little lad was right.

Living like this, they were better off dead.

"You're Jun Xie right?" Yan Bu Gui raised his head at that moment and his eyes seemed different.

Jun Wu Xie looked at him with the same chilly eyes.

"If you think that we can live a properly and proudly, don't take back your words. Let me see if you can do it your way, and turn the fates of Qiao Chu and the others." Yan Bu Gui said smilingly.

Chapter 363: “Human Skin Map (1)”

It was interesting to note that when the little lad sought for discipleship, Yan Bu Gui was hesitant to accept. And now that the little lad was unwilling, Yan Bu Gui was seeking to accept the discipleship.

But.....

It was now up to Jun Wu Xie to decide instead.

Jun Wu Xie did not reply and Qiao Chu was getting flustered. He grabbed at Jun Wu Xie by the arm and pulled her into his room.

The others stood still and did not move from their spots. They knew very well what Qiao Chu was up to and did not step in to stop him.

When they were inside the room, Qiao Chu searched and produced a small brocade box. Jun Wu Xie had seen that box before. They retrieved it when they were in the Qing Yun Clan.

“This is the reason why Brother Hua and I infiltrated into the Qing Yun Clan.” Qiao Chu brought the box before Jun Wu Xie and gestured for her to open it.

Jun Wu Xie opened the box and a map laid within. She looked closer and she saw that the map was drawn on a piece of human skin!

“That piece of human skin was cut out from my father’s back.” Qiao Chu’s voice suddenly grew suppressed.

Jun Wu Xie looked up. The map drawn on the piece of human skin was not complete and she could see that it formed only a part of the whole map.

“Me, Brother Hua, Fei Yan, Rong Ruo and our Master, were all from the Middle Realm. The powers of the Middle Realm is broken up into, One region, Four sides, Nine Temples and Twelve Palaces.

The lone region among them refers to the Dark Regions, under the command of the Dark Emperor, and is the most powerful force in the Middle Realm. The people who attacked us previously were two people from the Palace of Flame Demons from the Twelve Palaces. Centuries ago, the Dark Regions held control over the Middle Realm, and the four sides, nine temples and the twelve palaces capitulated and surrendered all their magic items and weapons to the Dark Emperor. But the Dark Emperor died suddenly and all his treasures and magic items were buried together with him deep in the catacombs of the Dark Emperor.”

Qiao Chu slowly explained further: “The tomb of the Dark Emperor, contains all of the most powerful magical items and unimaginable riches in the Middle Realm and it was the treasure trove everyone in the Middle Realm dreams of possessing. But for the unendingly and rigidly loyal minions of the Dark Emperor, no one knew where the catacombs of the Dark Emperor laid. The Dark Regions had lost their Dark Emperor and their might was not like before. But the Dark Emperor was the one man who dominated the entire Middle Realm and even after his death, his dominating reputation lingered. If anyone dared to make any moves towards the Dark Emperor’s tomb, the Dark Regions would swarm out of their nest and annihilate them.”

“But human greed had always been insatiable and people continued to eye the Dark Emperor’s treasures. With intensive but discreet investigations over long periods of time, they finally uncovered news that the Dark Emperor’s tomb laid in the Lower Realm. In order to not alert anyone, and to keep the treasures for themselves, the Twelve Palaces sent a group of people into the Lower Realm to locate the catacombs of the Dark Emperor. The search carried on for hundreds of years over an endless number of expeditions. Finally, seven out of the countless people sent out found the location of the tomb. They had come from different powers and in order to curb and restrict each other, they split up the map and tattooed them on the backs of the seven of them.”

Upon saying that, Qiao Chu's face darkened as he continued: "The people who located the Dark Emperor's tomb all returned to the Middle Realm, and handed their portion of the map to the powers they served respectively. They had thought that their mission was accomplished with all the hard work they had put in in the Lower Realm, and they deserved a good rest. But what awaited them instead was a massacre!"

"The Twelve Palaces were fearful of reprisal from the Dark Regions and pushed all blame of desecrating the Dark Emperor's tomb onto the seven men. None of them survived and the tattooed maps on their backs were carved out and held by seven of the twelve palaces. As the maps were split and all the individual palaces selfishly wanted to monopolize the treasure, till this day, they still have not found the exact location of the catacombs."

Chapter 364: “Human Skin Map (2)”

“Those people gave up their whole lives in the search for the Dark Emperor’s tomb for the powers they served, they suffered the curses and verbal abuse while alive and were not able to rest in peace even after their deaths. They died under torture and their souls were completely destroyed. Their families were not spared and massacred without exception.” Qiao Chu laughed loudly suddenly after he told the story, tears forming in his eyes as he looked at Jun Wu Xie.

“Wouldn’t you think that those people were so dumb? They knew that the Dark Emperor’s tomb was not to be desecrated and they got themselves and their whole family tree massacred because of their blind loyalty to the various powers they served respectively. The Twelve Palaces seek the Dark Emperor’s treasures, but they did not want to shoulder the responsibility of betrayal and used those few people as scapegoats. Those people were really dumb to fall for the tricks of the Twelve Palaces.”

Jun Wu Xie listened to every word in silence. Qiao Chu laughed, seemingly mocking himself as the tears flowed down his face endlessly at the same time.

“If not for Master’s timely interference that saved the four of us here, we would not be here now. Master sneaked us out of the Middle Realm and brought us here into the Lower Realm at a great risk. Here, he taught us how to develop our spiritual powers, and to hide our identities to bide for time. Right from the moment our entire families were massacred, we had all given up on life. The only thing driving us forward is to exact our revenge upon the Twelve Palaces! Our Master has forbidden us to fight the other students so as we do not draw attention to ourselves and expose our identities which will bring us certain doom. So, Little Xie, please do not blame him. If not for him, we would not be alive now.” Qiao Chu said as he wiped the tears from his face and

pushed down the raging emotions within him.

He exposed this most painful wound he carried in his heart all his life to Jun Xie as he did not want to see his newly found brother harbour any prejudice against his revered Master.

They were both precious to him and he wished they could get along well.

Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes and suddenly stood up to walk towards the door.

Yan Bu Gui stared at Jun Wu Xie as she strode quickly towards him, his face was edged with worry.

Jun Wu Xie stopped before Yan Bu Gui and she said in a clear voice.

“Master.”

“My disciple.”

Yan Bu Gui wasn't just being weak, but doing everything he could to protect his four disciples. His methods might have been a little extreme but his intentions were nevertheless noble.

For Yan Bu Gui to escape from the Middle Realm with four young ones in tow, only the Heavens knew how much hardship he had gone through to hide and protect the four young kids from the pursuit and persecution from the twelve palaces while he brought them up and taught them.

The simple form of address of “Master” made the tensed up Hua Yao and the others heave a sigh of relief. Jun Wu Xie's earlier unhesitant defence of Rong Ruo against the humiliation by the youths had left a deep imprint of gratitude on their hearts and they were glad things had turned out well.

“Cough..... Since you have addressed me as your Master, would that mean you will listen to Master from now onwards? When things just like today happens in future.....” Yan Bu Gui was deeply

gladdened by his new disciple and was just starting to educate him on the “ways to survive in the Phoenix Academy” when Jun Wu Xie suddenly interrupted him by saying:

“If something like this happens again, I will fight back just as I did today.” Her face calm and expressionless.

Yan Bu Gui was at a total loss for words.

“I appreciate Master’s noble intentions and your justified concerns for us, your disciples. But I cannot agree.” Jun Wu Xie’s eyes were determined. She acknowledged Yan Bu Gui’s righteous and noble character, but his methods of handling such matters were a little overboard.

“For such matters, please leave it to your disciple to handle in future.” Jun Wu Xie said finally.

They were now in the same boat now that she had acknowledged Yan Bu Gui as a Master. She would never in a million years allow her Master and fellow senior disciples to live under anyone’s humiliation and abuse.

Yan Bu Gui gaped like a goldfish and no words came out.

Standing on one side, Qiao Chu was beaming like a newly risen sun. They had held back and suppressed their rage at the constant abuse for a long time, and they wished for nothing more than to see their new junior teach those brats from the other wings a lesson they would never forget.

Those four youths who had always abided by Yan Bu Gui’s words and had not challenged him once, did not notice that with Jun Wu Xie’s addition, their lives had started to change. This was the first step towards what fate had for them to become and their lives were to change drastically. In the near future, the destined six that were to come together to kick up a unbelievable storm throughout the three realms now numbered five!

Chapter 365: “Human Skin Map (3)”

Faced with Jun Xie’s “insistence”, Yan Bu Gui was helpless and had no choice but to give in to him. But he secretly instructed the others to keep an eye on Jun Xie and protect him from harm.

Because Jun Xie possessed a rather unique ring spirit, Yan Bu Gui did not give him the usual instructions in the development of his spiritual powers but to just stay by the lotus pond and accompany the recovering Snow Lotus.

Qiao Chu and the others were looking into ways to locate the other six human skin maps. The Twelve Palaces might have seized possession of them, but they did not dare to keep that hot potato in hand. The Twelve Palaces had instead secretly colluded with various powers of the Lower Realm and had given the maps to them to do their dirty job of searching for the Dark Emperor’s tomb on their behalf.

Sneaky tactics like this, were commonly employed by the Twelve Palaces.

The treasures in the Dark Emperor’s tomb, would grant anyone who found it, power capable of obliterating the Twelve Palaces.

Qiao Chu and the others sought revenge and Jun Wu Xie’s objective coincided perfectly with them as she sought the annihilation of the Palace of Flame Demons.

On the other hand, Jun Wu Xie’s discipleship had also made her aware of Yan Bu Gui and his disciples’ painful destitution.

Qiao Chu and the others possessed strong powers, but they were forced to hide them in fear of drawing unwanted attention. Every single mission’s objective was very clear, and it was only to pursue the other maps from any clues they had gathered.

Other than that, the five of them in the East Wing of the Phoenix Academy had no other survival skills. At least in terms of earning

money, their talent in this aspect was zilch.

It had not been that bad just a few years ago. Yan Bu Gui had pawned some of the treasures he had brought from the Middle Realm, but it did not last and soon they had spent every single cent. Yan Bu Gui did not have anything else he could exchange for money and for the recent few years, the five of them had barely scraped by, living in poverty.

An obvious instance would be that the few of them had not worn any new clothes for at least the past two years.

In contrast, Jun Wu Xie did not understand their quandary as she had never been pressed for money in both her past and present life. In her past life, she might have been young when she left the demon's lair, but with her unsurpassed skills in medicine, she led a bountiful life. And after her rebirth, although the Lin Palace had been plagued by endless dangers, they had nevertheless not faced any shortage when it came to money.

To the extent that when Jun Wu Xie was looking at her brand new Master and fellow disciples squatting in a circle in the courtyard, discussing how they were going to try to raise money to hand over to the headmaster, her mind had, on this rarest of occasions, and for the first time in her two lives, drawn a complete blank.

“Why don't Fei Yan and I make a quick trip out? We can try out robbery?” Qiao Chu suggested innocently.

Without a word, Yan Bu Gui smacked him mightily on the head!

Qiao Chu rubbed the back of his throbbing head and shrugged his shoulders, trying to indicate he was just kidding.

The double headed bone snake is still in recovery, or I might be able to gather some herbs from the hills.” Hua Yao was frowning, deep in thought. When they had been extremely hard pressed previously, Hua Yao had sent the double headed bone snake into

the hills silently in the night to dig up some herbs to sell for some money several times.

But the double headed bone snake had not recovered from its injuries and Hua Yao could not bear to make his ring spirit suffer the toil at that moment.

“We’re really all cleaned out..... Sigh.....” Fei Yan wanted to cry at that point.

Rong Ruo was the calmest among them, but his brow furrowed deeply as well.

“Sigh..... Forget it! I’ll go see the headmaster and ask him for a few more days’ grace again.” Yan Bu Gui’s heart winced as he saw the forlorn looks on his disciples’ faces and he tried to wave it off. As the Master of these poor kids, he felt that these problems should be handled by him alone.

Alas, anything that can go wrong will go wrong. Before Yan Bu Gui could go see the headmaster with his plea, the person in charge of the South Wing, He Qiu Sheng, came storming towards the East Wing, his face dark as thunder.

He Qiu Sheng was the Master of the South Wing, and the youth that Jun Wu Xie had beaten to a pulp was his disciple. When his disciple had gone to the East Wing to press for payment of their debt as usual, who would have expected this time that the barbaric disciples of the East wing would blatantly attack his disciple, to the extent that his disciple was still bedridden till now!

Chapter 366:”Rise of the East Wing (1)”

He Qiu Sheng’s rage visibly showed on his face and his eyes were aflame as he stared at Yan Bu Gui and his disciples.

“Yan Bu Gui! You still owe the academy their fees and you indulge in your disciples’ violence!? And you can still sit here drinking wine leisurely!?”

The viciously berated Yan Bu Gui gripped at the wine jar in his hand and smiled weakly. Wine? Where would he find money to buy wine? The wine jar was filled with water and the faint wine’s fragrance was just the smell that had seeped deep into the wine jar.

But Yan Bu Gui was not about to give himself any excuses.

“It’s Qiu Sheng I see, what brought you to our East Wing here today? Do you want to come in and take a seat?” Yan Bu Gui asked smiling.

The look Yan Bu Gui gave was almost grovelling but Qiao Chu and the others who knew the real reason why he discarded his pride only felt all the more bitter.

If it was not for the four disciples that dragged him down and kept his hands tied, with Yan Bu Gui’s strong spiritual powers, he would be able to live a life of luxury anywhere he chose in the Lower Realm.

“You seem to be taking it real easy. Let me tell you Yan Bu Gui! If you do not give me a satisfactory answer about this, even if the headmaster spares you, you and me will remain irreconcilable! You think I would even bother to step anywhere near this dump of yours? If it was not for the headmaster’s summons for you to go to him, I wouldn’t want to dirty my shoes by coming here!” He Qiu Sheng’s attitude was an exact replica of his head disciple’s. In their eyes, the East Wing only housed a gaggle of beggars that refused to leave, sponged on the Phoenix Academy as freeloaders, were all

weak and useless, and played dumb and extorted the headmaster.

Yan Bu Gui was at a loss. He might have been able to smooth over some other situations, but now that he faced the accusation of his disciples injuring He Qiu Sheng's disciples, the situation was getting rather tricky. If he remembered it right, most of He Qiu Sheng's disciples might be completely lacking in talents, but they made up the group that held the highest "gold value" among the all the disciples of the Phoenix Academy. It was estimated that almost half of the Phoenix Academy's funds, came from the families of the South Wing disciples.

"If you don't like it here, then scram." Suddenly, a cold voice broke He Qiu Sheng litany.

He Qiu Sheng's eyes narrowed and he turned to the source of that voice.

He only saw a small petite youth, who was staring coldly right at him.

"Who do you think you are!? How dare you speak to me in that manner!?" He Qiu Sheng was now quivering with rage. He never would have imagined that a mere disciple in the East Wing would dare to humiliate him like that.

Jun Wu Xie lifted her chin and continued staring coldly at He Qiu Sheng.

"Disciple of the East Wing, Jun Xie."

"I see! You are the little beggar they just picked up! You have sponged on the Phoenix Academy long enough and we have yet to settle the bill with you! And furthermore, you actually had the audacity to beat up my disciple!" Once He Qiu Sheng heard that name, he knew that that was the culprit in the East Wing who had beat up his disciple so badly that he could not even get out of bed. He exploded at that moment and strode menacingly towards Jun Xie, raising his hand, intending to teach the little brat a lesson.

However, before that hand could lower down, it found its wrist tightly bound by the iron grip of Yan Bu Gui.

“He Qiu Sheng, my disciples are not people you can touch just because you want to.” Yan Bu Gui’s eyes had suddenly turned steely. Jun Wu Xie’s words had struck a chord within him and he had not stopped thinking about it. Those words had brought a change in that strong heart.

When it was just targeted at him, he could tolerate it, he would concede to it, even when it humiliated him. But he would never allow anyone to lay a finger on his disciples!

That was the first time He Qiu Sheng saw those eyes on Yan Bu Gui. It was just a single look, and He Qiu Sheng paled immediately.

All this time, the drunkard had never retaliated to any of his endless provocations and humiliations. But today, those steely eyes had unnerved He Qiu Sheng and that had quickly stopped his intimidation of the puny and weak boy.

“You! That’s great! Yan Bu Gui, that’s just great! You would shield the little brat to such an extent. Let us bring him to see the headmaster together. Let the headmaster see for himself what kind of trash your beggars’ den is harbouring nowadays!” As if he had suffered unbelievable injustice, he raged as he drew his hand back and continued with his shouting tirade.

Chapter 367: "Rise of the East Wing (2)"

Yan Bu Gui's brow was furrowed. He did not want to involve Jun Wu Xie with such matters.

But Jun Wu Xie readily agreed: "Let's go."

Even the Qing Yun Clan fell before her. How can the headmaster of a decrepit academy compare to that?

"Good! I'll wait for both of you in the headmaster's study!" He Qiu Sheng left hurriedly after saying that.

After He Qiu Sheng left, Yan Bu Gui's eyes softened immediately as his gaze fell upon Jun Wu Xie in helplessness.

"Jun Xie, you don't need to....."

"I'll go." Jun Wu Xie said curtly. The concept of the servitude as a disciple to a Master was foreign to Jun Wu Xie and she was only just learning from her observation of Qiao Chu and the others and that little bit was all she knew at that moment.

Yan Bu Gui sighed heavily. He knew that Jun Wu Xie did not speak much but it was clear to him that his new little disciple was a little man of his words. Whatever passed those lips became unwavering truth, and could not be changed easily.

Jun Wu Xie handed the little black cat into Rong Ruo's care once again and left to go to the headmaster's with Yan Bu Gui.

Along the way, they passed several Phoenix Academy disciples. When those youths saw Jun Wu Xie with Yan Bu Gui, they started pointing and whispering among themselves blatantly, paying no heed nor showing any respect for Yan Bu Gui's position as a Master in the academy.

Yan Bu Gui was used to their disrespect and had not ever been affected by all that. But this time, his eyes glanced at Jun Wu Xie, feeling sorry that Jun Wu Xie had to suffer under those pointing

fingers and hushed whispers.

But Jun Wu Xie did not seem affected by it in the least. Yan Bu Gui could see that his little disciple's back would stand just as straight and not bend in the slightest even if the sky fell on them then.

He had been worried as he thought Jun Wu Xie might not have had to suffer from so many gazes thrown at them, full of disdain.

But the fact was, Yan Bu Gui could not have been more wrong!

Before Jun Wu Xie had embarked on her quest to force a change of the regime in Qi, her reputation had been in tatters. The looks the people of the Qi Kingdom had given her in those days had been many times worse. But.....

She had never been bothered by them. Her eyes had not even bothered to rest on those people even for a second then.

The original Phoenix Academy had had a huge campus but its lands had shrunk drastically after it had been rebuilt. Due to its lack of funds, the academy's buildings had not been refurbished or properly maintained for years and its decrepit facade were painfully visible, showing starkly the academy's embarrassing financial situation.

The headmaster's study was a small little place and the paint on the door was peeling. Weeds grew in the crevices of the steps leading up to the door and the whole place looked dismal.

As they pushed the door open, a slouchy old man with a full white beard was in the room, sitting behind his table. Upon the old and wrinkled face, a pair of eyes narrowed as He Qiu Sheng stood at one side, criticizing Yan Bu Gui and his new disciple, Jun Wu Xie endlessly in a high pitched voice.

When he saw Yan Bu Gui and Jun Wu Xie enter, He Qiu Sheng's complaints intensified and the pitch of his voice started to rise even higher.

The expression on Yan Bu Gui's face was clearly flustered but Jun Wu Xie was a placid calm, looking as though those complaints had nothing to do with her.

“Headmaster, look over here. These two people are flagrantly flouting your rules! I had just tallied the numbers earlier today and over the past few days, the East Wing's losses had increased by another ten over taels! If we are to continue to indulge them, they might drag the whole Phoenix Academy down with them.” He Qiu Sheng continued persistently.

The moment money was mentioned, the headmaster's bored expression perked up. He raised his head and stared at Yan Bu Gui and Jun Wu Xie.

“Bu Gui, when are you going to pay up on the money still owing? We cannot allow you to drag your feet on the payment indefinitely. You allowed this disciple of yours to injure another disciple of the South Wing, and when the news of this incident reaches the ears of his family, the family is going to come after you! And if they decide to withdraw their child from the academy, we would lose another source of income here!” The old headmaster nagged at Yan Bu Gui, his face deeply aggrieved.

Chapter 368:”Rise of the East Wing (3)”

Yan Bu Gui’s expression grew more helpless as the headmaster’s nagging continued, and He Qiu Sheng stood on one side in glee.

“If I might add headmaster, I think the East Wing should be led by a different person. Look at what Yan Bu Gui had done now? He had only attracted just those few disciples all these years. Besides those little beggars, who would accept his as their Master? And now, the situation in the East Wing is only getting worse. They had suddenly decided to pick up another little beggar from somewhere out there who isn’t going to pay as well, further sponging on the academy. That little beggar had even had the audacity to injure my disciple from the South Wing! If you are to allow this to continue, the academy is sure to be doomed!” He Qiu Sheng incited viciously, his words dripping with venom.

“This.....” The headmaster frowned deeply, exasperated.

Jun Wu Xie observed coldly at all that was going on in the study, and the chill in her eyes intensified.

“Headmaster, you must not hesitate any longer. Do you want to wait till the leeches in the East Wing finally drive out all the South Wing disciples from the academy before you’ll act? Those disciples are all.....” He Qiu Sheng had not finished talking when.....

Jun Wu Xie slapped her hand on the headmaster’s table. Her voice was clear and it made all the other pairs of eyes in the room turn to her. They looked down at the small hand on the table and saw one bank note pressed under it.

“Is this enough?” Jun Wu Xie asked coldly.

In that moment, the study was filled with silence.

The old headmaster’s eyes were dead fixed on that note and he did not move, but his eyes sparkled brightly when he saw it.

A bank note.....

When was the last time he had laid his eyes on a bank note?

He Qiu Sheng who had been pushing vehemently for the headmaster to dismiss Yan Bu Gui and to kick out his freeloading disciples before he was suddenly interrupted turned white as a sheet when he saw the bank note!

His face twitched and he tried to calm himself before he continued: "The East Wing had had their fees outstanding for years. Don't think you can appease the situation with just a few hundred taels. That disciple of mine comes from a rich family and his family would not think much of the measly few hundred taels. It is not something a little beg....."

He Qiu Sheng's voice trailed off as his throat caught.

The old headmaster reached his hand over towards the bank note as He Qiu Sheng was speaking and examined it closely. When he saw the amount stated on the note, he suddenly drew in a deep breath!

He Qiu Sheng snuck a quick peek as he forced a nonchalant look on his face. When his eyes picked up on the figure on the note, his eyes bulged and he stared in disbelief and his knees almost buckled.

On that snowy white bank note, an astounding figure was written clearly in bold.....

One hundred thousand taels!

The old headmaster's hands trembled as he held the bank note, and his beard bristled.

The Phoenix Academy's annual income minus expenses totaled only thirty to forty thousand taels, and Jun Wu Xie had just thrown out a hundred thousand taels without even flinching!

That was the Phoenix Academy's three years' profit right there in the headmaster's hands!

No wonder the headmaster was shaking like a willow in the wind.

He Qiu Sheng looked like he just swallowed faeces and he was absolutely speechless.

His disciples might be capable of coming out with a few hundred taels and that brat had easily thrown out a hundred thousand taels!

He Qiu Sheng suspected his eyes must be playing tricks on him.

“That.... that bank note must be fake!” He Qiu Sheng shouted in disbelief. It was impossible that such a decrepit looking brat would have so much money!

Jun Wu Xie raised an eyebrow and stared at the fuming He Qiu Sheng but could not be bothered to even speak to him.

The old headmaster heard He Qiu Sheng and he squinted his eyes as he carefully examined the bank.

After a few moments, he broke into a wide smile: “The bank note is real! This is the seal of the Soul Moon Bank! It’s definitely authentic!”

He Qiu Sheng was completely stumped this time. The Soul Moon Bank was the biggest bank around and their branches were all over the lands and their seals were imprinted with spiritual powers and could not be fully duplicated by others.

Chapter 369: “Do you want more? (1)”

He Qiu Sheng’s face was green and his lips had turned purple. He felt as if he had been slapped across the face and felt humiliated beyond words.

The old headmaster turned his eyes back onto Jun Wu Xie, and his expression had turned incredibly warm and passionate towards her, and those eyes only saw a walking and speaking gold ingot in Jun Wu Xie.

“Jun Xie is your name right? You can stay in the East Wing as long as you like and if you happen to find anything unsatisfactory, feel free to let me know.” The old headmaster had suddenly turned servile towards the unbelievably generous and extravagant youth and wished at that moment for Jun Wu Xie to stay in the Phoenix Academy for life.

Jun Wu Xie did not grace him with a reply.

The old headmaster cleared his throat and told He Qiu Sheng off sternly: “The incident with your disciple is a matter of the past and I do not want to hear another word of it. Jun Xie had just come to the Phoenix Academy and is just adapting herself here. Keep a tight rein on your disciples and do not let them stray too far and inconvenience others. If I ever hear that your unruly disciples were to bully him, I will not take it so lightly again.”

Under the lure of the filthy scent of money, and having weighed the situation under its irresistible persuasion, the old headmaster fell heavily under its spell!

He Qiu Sheng was still standing at the side, turned into stone, and he could not utter a single word.

Bullied!? That brat was standing before them alive and well with nary a scratch! His disciple was the one that was still lying in bed!

Who was doing the bullying here!?

Nevertheless, He Qiu Sheng was helpless as he knew all this time that the headmaster only had eyes for money. Whoever had more, would win his favour! The South Wing had dominated the Phoenix Academy all this while because many of the disciples under him were from well to do families, but things had now changed suddenly. The beggars' den was just admitted a fabulously loaded nouveau riche and snatched the top spot in the academy from him!

All the fees of the disciples in the South Wing would not add up to a hundred thousand even in a couple of years, there was no way they could beat that.

After berating He Qiu Sheng, the old headmaster came over to Jun Wu Xie smiling like a fresh spring breeze again and said: "If you think that Yan Bu Gui is unsuitable in any way, please let me know so I can arrange the Masters from the other wings for you if you like."

Jun Wu Xie replied curtly: "East Wing is good."

"Yes yes yes. Yan Bu Gui must have been extremely blessed to be able to recruit such an amazing disciple, he must have done some great deeds in his past life." The old headmaster was bowing till his head was almost touching the floor.

"If there is nothing else, I would like to leave." Jun Wu Xie was not interested in the fawning old headmaster.

"Sure, sure. Please go back and rest. Bu Gui, hurry and send your disciple back for his rest. It's windy here, do not let your disciple catch a cold. He seems a little thin, I'll get the kitchen to prepare something a little more nutritious for the East Wing tomorrow." The old headmaster was actually displaying a rare moment of generosity.

Yan Bu Gui's face was blank as he led Jun Wu Xie out. Even after they had stepped out of the room, his expression was still in shock.

"Kid, where did you get so much money?" Yan Bu Gui had seen

Jun Wu Xie pull out a single bank note and it had not only almost blinded He Qiu Sheng and the headmaster, even Yan Bu Gui felt the world was an amazing place filled with bizarre things and people.

His little disciple had been dressed in plain clothes and had looked like he had come from a simple family. But he had pulled out a one hundred thousand taels bank note without blinking an eye.....

Yan Bu Gui had come to the Lower Realm for so many years and he had never seen money more than a hundred taels of silver.

“Much?” Jun Wu Xie looked at Yan Bu Gui, her eyes doubtful.

After her rebirth, she had never bought anything nor needed to pay for anything. Anything and everything that she needed, Jun Xian prepared them for her and she had never handled money before in this world. The bank notes she had with her were just what Jun Xian had stuffed into her hands just before she left. Those notes were as valuable as waste paper in her eyes.

“Do you want more of them? I have them here.” Jun Wu Xie saw that Yan Bu Gui seemed to hold a rather strong interest in the bank notes and she pulled out a wad of them from her sleeve..... A thick wad of bank notes.

The lowest denomination among that thick wad valued at least fifty thousand taels!

After Jun Xian had done it, Mo Qian Yuan had done the same thing and stuffed money into Jun Wu Xie’s hands before he would let her leave.

A Duke, and an Emperor..... They would not have in their possession any bank notes in denominations less than ten thousand anyway.....

Chapter 370: “Do you want more? (2)”

Yan Bu Gui’s eyes almost popped out of his head. He was shocked beyond words at the amount of money Jun Xie had pushed into his arms. His eyes swept past those bank notes and he counted and estimated the amount in his head. There was at least a million taels in his hands.....

As if Jun Xie had dropped hot coals in his arms, Yan Bu Gui hurriedly shoved them back to Jun Xie.

“I don’t need it. You better keep these.” As those words came out of his mouth, his heart was nevertheless, dripping with blood.....

A small petite sized kid was actually carrying such a large amount of money on him!

Made the burly towering Yan Bu Gui felt so small before Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie kept the money back into her sleeve, oblivious to Yan Bu Gui’s crumbling self esteem and deeply conflicted heart.

When they got back to the East Wing, Qiao Chu and the rest of the gang were waiting anxiously in the courtyard. When they all saw Jun Xie and Yan Bu Gui who had returned so quickly, they rushed up to the pair just coming in through the gate.

“How did it go? What did the headmaster say?” Qiao Chu asked anxiously.

Yan Bu Gui sighed heavily and his face was a mask of deep melancholy, making the four hearts of his disciples fall so heavily they almost reached their toes.

“In future.....”

Qiao Chu and the others looked up at Yan Bu Gui’s heavy tone, staring at him with tears brimming in their eyes.

“That He Qiu Sheng would never come here to seek trouble with

us again!” Yan Bu Gui’s face suddenly beamed into a wide smile.

“What?” Qiao Chu and his other three fellow disciples stared in wonder at their Master.

At that moment, Qiao Chu’s eyes widened in alarm as he turned to Jun Wu Xie to ask: “Little Xie! Don’t tell me you..... you thrashed up He Qiu Sheng and the headmaster as well!?”

With Jun Xie’s temperament, that must be the case!

“No.” Jun Wu Xie replied.

“You..... you must not take so hard. If they had done anything to you, Little Yan and me would go abduct him and revenge you without letting Master know.” Qiao Chu promised worriedly, without even thinking.

Yan Bu Gui’s huge hand slapped Qiao Chu on the back of his head once more, and he said rolling his eyes at his moron of a disciple: “You must think I’m deaf!”

Jun Wu Xie was made speechless at Qiao Chu’s antics. She could not understand how such a simple matter like this became so complicated in their minds.

“Alright, alright. Everything’s fine now, you kids go keep up with your training, and not just stay here and laze.” Yan Bu Gui dispersed the group with his words, a wide smile hidden behind his bushy beard.

His new little disciple, really exceeded all his expectations!

Yan Bu Gui was not prepared to explain everything in detail and Jun Wu Xie did not seem to want to at all as well. Qiao Chu and the others could only leave begrudgingly to continue with their training, but their minds were still filled with worry. They prepared themselves mentally to face up to He Qiu Sheng and the headmaster and protect their little junior fellow disciple when they next come looking for trouble.

Jun Wu Xie went back to her room and sat down carrying the little black cat in her arms. She called out softly and Ye Sha appeared suddenly through the door.

“Miss, what are your orders?” Ye Sha asked, kneeling on one knee.

Jun Wu Xie took out a wad of bank notes and put them on the table. She whispered a few words to Ye Sha and moments later, Ye Sha kept the money carefully before he disappeared soundlessly.

Jun Wu Xie remained sitting on the chair and looked down at the sleeping black cat.

If it was awake, maybe it could have told her how to handle the situation before her now.

The next morning, Qiao Chu and the others walked out of their rooms with dark rings below their eyes. They had not slept the whole night, having tossed and turned the whole night with worry, but no one had come throughout the night after all. Their curiosity was further piqued by what had happened at the headmaster's and when they saw each other's dark eyes, they all smiled sheepishly at each other.

“Looks like the headmaster really won't be coming to stir up trouble after all. But how did Master and Little Xie do it?” Qiao Chu scratched his head in confusion.

Hua Yao's fair complexion made his darkened eyes look more prominent and he stood shaking his head as well, similarly befuddled.

“It good that they're not coming, let's not worry about it.” Fei Yan stretched lazily, her sweet and pretty face was still tinged with a bit of sleepiness.

Rong Ruo just pulled at his clothes to tidy them, and did not say anything.

Chapter 371: “Do you want more? (3)”

The four fellow disciples of the East Wing had not much of a reaction but the same could not be said for the rest of the Phoenix Academy!

The ruckus from a group of people suddenly broke out and dragged the four sleepyheads to the source of the noise. However, when they got there, they were shocked by the sight.

They saw tens of burly men dressed in grey. They carried long ladders, axes and lumber on their shoulders and coming towards them into the East Wing of the Phoenix Academy. And behind those men, was another group, whose men were carrying huge crates that each needed two men to carry with the load hung from bamboo poles on their shoulders. The men all rushed forward when they saw Qiao Chu and the others coming out from the East Wing and put down their load.

“We found the right place at last. Please help us to sign receipt here please. It is for eight crates of of fine garments from the Moon Weavers Pavilion. Seven crates of male garments and one crate of female dresses. We have mixed in shoes, socks and some accessories, compliments of our proprietor to our esteemed customers. Please check the items delivered and see if everything is in good order and we can leave.” The leader of the group was dressed in rather fine clothes and he wore a bright smile on his face as he pushed the receipt before Qiao Chu.

Qiao Chu was is a fluster as he stared unblinkingly at the eight crates before him.

With all the attention attracted by the big group of men in front of the East Wing, the disciples from the other wings were all chattering loudly in speculation and when the leader of the men stated his purpose, the chatterings grew into a loud exclamations!

Moon Weavers Pavilion!

That was a widely famous clothing chain for fine clothes!

In that place, a mere handkerchief sold for more than ten taels!

Did they really hear him correctly?

The beggar's den actually ordered them at one go..... eight crates..... eight

How much did that cost? The mouths of the youths all around suddenly felt dry as they tried to calculate the cost.

Most of them fell speechless at the sight of the scene before them, staring in incredulity and unable to believe their ears.

Qiao Chu turned into a statue. He understood every single word the man was saying when he separated them, but put them together in a sentence, he could not fathom what they meant at that moment.

They did not even have money to pay the fees, how would they pay for such luxuries from the Moon Weavers Pavilion?

After waiting a long moment, when the man saw that Qiao Chu was not moving to receive the goods, he turned his head and pushed the receipts to Hua Yao.

Hua Yao was stunned a moment before he peered at the receipts and the goods, a frown on his face. He finally said: "Is there a mistake somewhere? We did not buy any of these things. I think it would be better if you send them all back."

It was eight whole crates! Even if they were to just pick any one item from among them, they would not be able to afford it.

The man said, still smiling: "There's no mistake. It is the Phoenix Academy, East Wing. The items have been paid for and you will only need to sign the receipt and that's all."

"All paid up?" Hua Yao looked at Rong Ruo.

But Rong Ruo was just as clueless.

The smiling man pointed at the name of the recipient at the bottom of the receipt and said:

“Yes, it was purchased by a customer named Jun Xie.”

“JUN XIE!?”

The four exclaimed loudly in unison upon hearing the name and their minds were completely blown away by that shocking revelation!

The youths from the other wings were just as confused. They had not heard that there was a disciple in the East Wing named Jun Xie. Thinking further on the matter, they assumed it to be a mistake. Those beggars in the East Wing would never be able to afford such luxuries from the Moon Weavers Pavilion.

Before Qiao Chu and the others could recover from their shock, a big burly man came up to them carrying lumber on his shoulder with another stack of receipts in his hand.

“That’s queer, a customer by the name of Jun Xie hired us to come to the Phoenix Academy’s East Wing for refurbishing and renovation works. Can I trouble you guys to sign these as well so my men can start on the works?”

“.....” Qiao Chu the statue now froze with his mouth wide open, his eyes bulging.

Hua Yao’s face showed astonishment, but his eyes sparkled.

Rong Ruo and Fei Yan exchanged a knowing glance, having finally figured out who was behind all this.

Chapter 372: “Do you want more? (4)”

“It’s Little Xie.....” Qiao Chu finally recovered enough to utter those few words as he stared in amazement at the crates, an indescribable feeling in his heart.

Hua Yao nodded: “The issue with the headmaster must have been settled in the same way.”

Yan Bu Gui had only claimed that all the issues had been cleared when he came back, but the reason was rather clear now as they all knew the headmaster was a snivelly money grabber and he only listened to whoever had the money and ignored all reason when he smelt gold.

And the situations before them only affirmed that they were right.

Jun Wu Xie had indeed cleared the issues with the headmaster and she had used the headmaster’s favourite language. Money.....

“I would not have thought that our little junior was actually so unbelievably and fabulously rich.” Fei Yan smiled till his eyes were narrowed to a slit as he spied one of the crates saying: “Err..... Do you think that crate of ladies wear, is meant for me?”

Qiao Chu looked at Fei Yan up and down, and seeing Fei Yan’s plain frock, he snickered evilly.

“I would say yes.”

Fei Yan’s face turned pale.

The sweet looking Fei Yan suddenly slunk sulkily to a corner, the jubilation suddenly disappeared without a trace.

“Cough..... Let me do it.” After Hua Yao realised what was happening here, he raised his hands and took the charcoal pencil from the man and signed “Hua Yao” on both the receipts.

After they had their receipts acknowledged, the man from the

Moon Weavers Pavilion smilingly ordered his men to bring the clothes inside and the burly man hollered at his men to begin their refurbishing works on the East Wing's building.

When Yan Bu Gui stepped out from the building, he was so overwhelmed and shocked by the sudden appearance of the big group of strange men hacking and knocking on the East Wing's building that he very nearly dropped the wine jar he held clasped in his hand.

He was just about to open his mouth to shout when his nose wrinkled at the alluring fragrance of fine wine and his eyes sparkled brightly.

Hua Yao was signing his name on another receipt when he received a big slap on the back of his head. He turned his head furious, but saw the towering figure of his Master and just kept quiet like a mouse.

“Where did all this wine come from?” Yan Bu Gui asked, with his eyes narrowed when he saw the many jars of wine before Hua Yao, while he almost drooled in his heart.

“Little Xie bought them.” Hua Yao finished signing and handed it back to the delivery man.

That morning, his wrist was hurting from signing receipts and the courtyard was almost filled up with all kinds of goods.

When Yan Bu Gui heard that Jun Xie had bought them, he immediately picked two jars up and suddenly disappeared back into his room and did not ask another word about it.

Hua Yao stared with a headache as he surveyed all the things they had received one after another since early this morning non stop and everything was stacked up in the courtyard. Food, clothes, everyday use items, and equipment for travel.....

It was more than he could count and it included everything they could think of!

They were all of superior quality and did not come cheap. They had lived in poverty for such a long time and it was just unbelievable for them. Even the youths from the other wings who were watching from a distance were about to go mad at what they saw.

They had seen the rich flaunt their wealth, but they had never seen anyone flaunt it in such a astounding manner!

After that morning, every single person in the Phoenix Academy became aware that in the East Wing, a disciple who was literally overflowing with money walked, and his name was Jun Xie!

Almost no one knew exactly when he was admitted into the East Wing or where he had come from. Before he had even shown his face, he had drowned the East Wing with his endless flow of gifts.

People had thrown an estimation on the gifts just for that morning and it was said to come up to be close to a million taels!

That figure drove almost everyone to lose their mind.....

The beggar's den had lost its name, as those who named the East Wing as such suddenly found themselves envious and jealous of the East Wing.

If East Wing that was the beggar's den could spend a million taels, the place they were at could only be no better than a pig's sty.

The youths from the other wings had come outside the East Wing in curiosity. But after seeing the extravagant splashing of money, they ran back to their own wings with their tails between their legs and stopped calling the East Wing the beggar's den ever since. But they did nickname Jun Xie as the "dumb one with too much money" in jealousy.

They had thought.....

If you have so much money, why go to the East Wing? Everyone knew that Yan Bu Gui of the East Wing was just a drunkard and

only had four lousy disciples all this time!

Chapter 373: “Inverted (1)”

Jun Wu Xie awoke from sleep and went out to the courtyard soon after. She saw a group of burly workmen fixing up the East Wing but her steps did not slow as she continued on towards the pond that the Snow Lotus was recovering in.

These few days, she guarded by the pond immediately upon awakening. She had previously done it just because Yan Bu Gui had told her to, to watch over the weakened Snow Lotus. But recently, she could clearly feel an intense flow of spiritual power flowing into her body endlessly. The surge of the spiritual power was actually more intense than when she had used Jade Nectar to cultivate the Snow Lotus’ seed in the beginning!

In just a few short days, the spiritual powers in her body had achieved a more than significant increase and this situation puzzled her a little.

As she sat by the pond carrying the sleeping black cat, Jun Wu Xie’s eyes were fixed on the Snow Lotus that was gradually radiating with life.

The once withered bloom, had shown signs of coming back to life as its dried up lotus leaves had dropped off one by one and was growing out new petals as well.

“Little Xie.” A voice sounded from behind Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie turned around to look and saw four blindingly striking figures standing behind her.

They had changed out of their washed till threadbare clothes and were now dressed in fine clothes. The designs of the clothes were simple, but the material used was of good quality.

Clothes really did made the man, and it was readily obvious at that moment.

The four of them were already blessed with outstanding features

but their old threadbare clothes had greatly diminished their looks. Now those new clothes had completely removed all that wretchedness and they all looked every inch like a young nobleman, graceful and handsome, that would draw all eyes irresistibly to them.

Fei Yan was dressed in a long coral blue dress and she was tugging at the hem of the dress coyly. Compared to the three handsome smiles, Fei Yan's expression was somehow a little perturbed.

Three jade green leaves to match a brilliant red flower. Fei Yan stood out looking more lovely and attractive in the contrast as those almond shaped eyes slightly lowered, looking slightly embarrassed.

"Do we look good?" Qiao Chu asked as he tugged at his outer robe, a jade ornament dangling from his hips.

Jun Wu Xie's eyes stopped as they hovered over Fei Yan and Rong Ruo a moment before she said: "Inverted."

"What?" Qiao Chu asked, puzzled.

"Or do you like to dress like that?" Jun Wu Xie asked with her head tilted, as she looked at Rong Ruo and Fei Yan.

Fei Yan and Rong Ruo were deeply shocked and it was a while before they reacted to what Jun Wu Xie had said.

"You know?" Fei Yan asked, with eyes wide in amazement, staring at Jun Wu Xie.

"Know what?" Jun Wu Xie asked Fei Yan.

"I..... I am a boy, and Little Ruo here is the girl....." Fei Yan pointed at himself and then pointed at Rong Ruo.

Rong Ruo was wearing an unnaturally handsome smile on her face.

Jun Wu Xie nodded.

“See!?! Qiao Chu! You and your dumb ideas! You told us that Little Xie would never know our real sexes!” Fei Yan cried out and pounced at Qiao Chu and pummeled at him.

In the beginning when Yan Bu Gui had brought them here, Fei Yan was the smallest in size. The clothes that they wore were old clothes that Yan Bu Gui had managed to beg from the headmaster. One of them had been for ladies. Since Fei Yan was the smallest in size among them and Rong Ruo could not fit into the lone piece of ladies clothing, it fell onto Fei Yan to wear it. And ever since, everytime Yan Bu Gui went out to get clothes for them, all the smaller sized ladies wear were always given to Fei Yan and moreover, Fei Yan had always been a boy with girlish features looking very sweet when dressed up as a girl. Driven by necessity due to the lack of adequate boy's clothing, Fei Yan had always been mistaken to be a girl by the other disciples of the Phoenix Academy. The graceful air, handsome looks and tall slender frame of Rong Ruo had the masses thinking him to be a elegant boy instead.....

Chapter 374: “Inverted (2)”

Fei Yan had thought that Jun Wu Xie did not know and had purchased one whole crate of ladies wear just for him. That had encouraged him to succumb to Qiao Chu's mischievous urging to appear before Jun Wu Xie dressed in that dress.

Who would have expected that Jun Wu Xie was actually aware of his not intended but well concealed sex!?

Thinking back on it, on the first day when Jun Xie had awoken, he had instead left the little black cat in Rong Ruo's hands and not to Fei Yan, who had been the first person he had seen, now seemed that Jun Xie had done that with good reason!

It was obvious that Jun Xie had already been aware of Rong Ruo's and Fei Yan's respective sexes then!

Moreover, Jun Xie had treated Rong Ruo somewhat differently from the rest all this while.

Fei Yan was feeling terribly embarrassed at that moment but Rong Ruo was still all smiles. Rong Ruo was suddenly dragged by Fei Yan determinedly away and moments later, they came back dressed in clothes as Jun Xie had originally meant to give.

But.....

Fei Yan still somehow looked like a girl who had crossdressed and though Rong Ruo did not look out of place, seeing her all decked up in a sweet girly dress nevertheless made Qiao Chu's skin crawl after having gotten so used to seeing Rong Ruo dressed in boy's clothes for as long as he could remember.

Finally, both of them could not stand the awkward stares the others kept giving them and went back in to change into the clothes they had worn the first time.

Upon seeing Fei Yan looking all resplendent again in his girly attire, Qiao Chu could not help but guffawed uncontrollable that

earned him another bashing from Fei Yan.

Fei Yan might be the smallest in size among the four of them, but he possessed the greatest strength. He lifted Qiao Chu with one hand and felled him with a single punch. If one were to disregard his actual sex, Fei Yan would do great justice to the term “Violent Lolita”.

While Qiao Chu was running around in circles chased by a fuming Fei Yan, Rong Ruo sat down beside Jun Xie and smiled: “Thank you.”

Even after having done so much, Jun Wu Xie had not mentioned a word about it.

“No need.” Jun Wu Xie replied softly. In her own mind, she could not think of a better use for the money.

Hua Yao stared at the crossdressed “sisters” and he suddenly found it to be rather amusing. He wiped the mirth from his face and he suddenly turned to Jun Xie in all seriousness as he said: “It might not be the best time now but Little Xie, there is one more thing we hope you can help us with.”

“Elixir?” Jun Wu Xie asked, raising an eyebrow.

Hua Yao nodded.

“Prescription.” Jun Wu Xie asked without a moment’s hesitation.

Hua Yao pulled out a prescription from within his clothes and handed it over to Jun Wu Xie whereby she gave it a quick scan with her eyes.

“Who is this medicine for?” Jun Wu Xie asked, raising her head in query.

“Master. He was severely injured many years ago while protecting us and can only numb the pain with alcohol now.” Hua Yao’s face darkened as he said those words. Due to poverty, they had not even been able to afford to buy wine for Yan Bu Gui and

the pains from those injuries must have been tormenting.

The prescription was brought out together with them when they left the Middle Realm and would treat Yan Bu Gui's injuries. When Qiao Chu had initially gone to the Ghost City to trade for Eastern Pearls, it had been one of the ingredients necessary for the elixir. But the elixir was extremely difficult to cultivate and even within the Middle Realm, very few people were able to achieve success in its cultivation.

When they came across Jun Xie, they had still been rather skeptical, but they would never let go of any trace of hope, no matter how small.

Jun Wu Xie lowered her head and went through the prescription once more.

That moment of silence made Hua Yao suddenly anxious and Rong Ruo's eyes became expectant.

"Herbs." Jun Wu Xie said suddenly.

"What?"

"Give me the herbs." Jun Wu Xie repeated, looking at Hua Yao.

Hua Yao finally understood what Jun Xie had meant and his usual calm demeanor cracked a little as he grew excited.

"You can do it?"

Jun Wu Xie nodded. The prescription was a little more complicated than usual but it was not still not beyond her. The sticky part was that the prescription called for extremely rare herbs and many that even Jun Wu Xie had never seen before.

"That's just fantastic! We will do everything we can to get the herbs!" Hua Yao's face brought into a smile just then. No matter how difficult it would be, at least now, they saw a ray of hope at the end!

Chapter 375: “Water of Heaven’s Spring (1)”

Ever since they were graced with Jun Wu Xie’s extravagant generosity, the East Wing suddenly seemed to rise from the ashes and shone blindingly with resplendent grandeur. The decrepit and rundown buildings were no more and had been completely refurbished. In the courtyard, the pond was fitted with miniature mountains and cliffs, and the entire building’s flooring were fitted with marble throughout.....

When seen from afar, among the run down buildings of the Phoenix Academy, the East Wing now stood out in contrast like a brilliant sunflower exuding brilliance, that drew all attention to it.

Jun Wu Xie’s spiritual powers had speedily increased over the past month and was nearing the orange level’s peak!

However, she was not able to achieve a breakthrough to the next level.

The only way she could break the level barrier, was to devour the spirit of others!

Jun Wu Xie held the Spirit Prison Jun Wu Yao had given her in her hands and her eyes narrowed as she fell deep in thought.

She needed to get stronger.

In order to just raise her powers, if she were to devour the ring spirit of others, that would be equivalent to murder.

Jun Wu Xie’s eyebrow was raised. She was not afraid to kill, but why kill the innocent?

Yan Bu Gui knocked on Jun Wu Xie’s door at that moment and she got up to open the door.

For the past month, Yan Bu Gui had rarely appeared but had occasionally come to the side of the lotus pond to see how the Snow Lotus was doing.

“Plant ring spirits develop very quickly, but the hurdles faced at the level barriers are difficult to break through. Your spiritual powers have shown signs of leakage recently. Are you about to breakthrough?” When Yan Bu Gui sat down, he looked at Jun Wu Xie in all seriousness and he was not tipsy on that rare occasion.

Jun Wu Xie nodded.

“For the breakthrough, you must also take note of the spirit that you devour. The higher the level of the ring spirit you devour, the better its effect will be for you.” Yan Bu Gui said, and he pulled out a cotton bag from his hips, before he put it on the table before Jun Wu Xie.

“Open it and see.”

Jun Wu Xie opened it without a word and the moment she looked into it, her eyes sparkled brightly.

It was just a small cotton bag and a marvel was revealed within when you opened it, the space within that the bag held was much bigger than it seemed by far!

“It’s called the cosmos bag, and it’s an item from the Middle Realm. Anything you put in there would be preserved for a long period and will not get damaged.” The cosmos bag was Yan Bu Gui’s last item he had with him brought from the Middle Realm. No matter how poor they had been in the past, he had never pawned or sold it, for no other reason than the fact that the cosmos bag did not exist in the Lower Realm and if he had exposed it to be circulated, it might attract the attention of the people of the Middle Realm.

And stored within the cosmos bag, there was a intricate and beautiful wine flask, carved out from Imperial Jade.

“Take out the wine flask.”

Jun Wu Xie lifted the wine flask out from the bag.

Yan Bu Gui retrieved a cup and placed it before Jun Wu Xie

before he said: “Pour out a cup.”

Jun Wu Xie raised the flask and poured its contents in. She saw that the liquid from the flask was clear and it glittered with stars as it filled the cup, and the air was suddenly filled with a fragrance that penetrated into the heart.

The aroma seemed to feel familiar like something she had smelt before but she could not remember it clearly.

“This is the Heaven’s Flask and inside it, is the Water of Heaven’s Spring. The supply is endless and will never be exhausted. The Heaven’s Spring might not be able to restore your soul, but it can at least nourish it enough to stop it from further damage. I know that you were injured by people from the Palace of the Flame Demons and while the Water of Heaven’s Spring nourishes your soul, it can also temporarily curb your soul’s presence. You would only need to drink one cup daily and it will last the whole day.” Yan Bu Gui stared at Jun Xie with a faraway look in his eyes. Jun Xie was different from Qiao Chu and the others, and he should not be confined to the tiny and virtually unknown Phoenix Academy.

Jun Wu Xie’s face showed a look of recognition. Water of Heaven’s Spring?

Wasn’t that name recorded in the dilapidated book she had? The one thing that was the most suited for the cultivation of the Snow Lotus?

Suddenly, she was able to identify where she had smelt that fragrance before.

“You poured this water into the pond?” Jun Wu Xie asked as she looked up at Yan Bu Gui.

Yan Bu Gui replied with a laugh: “Don’t forget, that book you use for your training and development, was given to Qiao Chu by me to put up for sale.”

Chapter 376: “Water of Heaven’s Spring (2)”

“I had flipped through those books, but a pity I do not possess a plant ring spirit and was unable to put it to good use. Since they had fallen into your hands, it must mean they are fated to be yours.” Yan Bu Gui said as he stroked at his beard.

“You should not stay here in the Phoenix Academy. You should go out and do what you want to do.”

Jun Wu Xie lowered her head and looked at the Heaven’s Flask in her hand. The one thing that she had previously sought endlessly, and exhausted all ways to get, had now been delivered right into her hands by Yan Bu Gui.

With the Heaven’s Flask, she would be able to return to the Lin Palace with peace of mind and need not be afraid of persecution from the Palace of the Flame Demons.

But.....

Was that what she want?

Spending her life in hiding and depending on the Water of Heaven’s Spring to escape persecution? And watch her enemies wilfully live on, while she huddled in concealment holding on tightly to the Heaven’s Flask?

“Master.” Jun Wu Xie suddenly raised her head. “The Dark Emperor’s tomb, is the place I must go to.”

She gripped the Heaven’s Flask in her hands and Jun Wu Xie’s eyes flashed with unfaltering determination. Living a life of compromise was not what she wanted. Since there were people who wanted her life, she would smite down her enemies to nip the problem in the bud!

Yan Bu Gui was stunned as he stared at Jun Wu Xie in astonishment.

“The day will come that I will annihilate the Palace of Flame Demons.” Jun Wu Xie exclaimed coldly.

Yan Bu Gui was speechless for a moment before he laughed out loud suddenly.

“Good, good, good. You might be small in size, but your ambitions are commendable! No wonder you’re..... Cough, since you have chosen your path, I will not hold you back. Keep the Heaven’s Flask and the cosmos bag well and remember! You must never expose the Heaven’s Flask to anyone. That thing will draw the people of the Twelve Palaces to come rushing at you even if you do not possess a plant ring spirit, and you will not be spared.”

Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes. The origins of the Heaven’s Flask must be a lot more complicated than what Yan Bu Gui was letting on.

In fact, Jun Wu Xie had been a little suspicious all along. Little Lotus had previously said that the Soul Calming Jade was one of the Seven Treasures of the Spirit World but it had suddenly disappeared one day. On top of that, Yan Bu Gui and his fellow disciples had said that all the magical items of the Middle Realm had been buried deep in the Dark Emperor’s tomb, and that should also include the Soul Calming Jade.

But if the Soul Calming Jade was supposed to be in the Dark Emperor’s tomb, how did it come into the hands of others?

And why would the Heaven’s Flask incur persecution from the Twelve Palaces?

“Thank you, Master.” Jun Wu Xie did not think any further into it. No matter what the reason was, the fact that she wanted the Palace of Flame Demons annihilated would not change.

“The fact that you addressed me as your Master is more than enough thanks.” Yan Bu Gui walked out of the room, laughing loudly to himself.

Jun Wu Xie suddenly picked up the cup that contained Water of Heaven's Spring and swallowed it all in one gulp!

From here on, she would not constrain herself to the tiny Phoenix Academy!

The Heavens seemed to have sensed Jun Wu Xie's murderous intent as barely two weeks later, Fei Yan came to them with a piece of news.

He had found a clue for another portion of the human skin maps.

And that human skin map was actually hidden in another academy!

Zephyr Academy!

It was one of the top three academies, their fame spreading to all ends of the world!

Qiao Chu and the others packed and readied themselves. This mission, would not just involve Qiao Chu and Hua Yao, but would include Fei Yan and Rong Ruo as well. Before they set out, they were greatly shocked by another piece of news!

Jun Xie, would be going with them!

"Little Xie, you..... really would come with us?" Qiao Chu asked cautiously as he gulped loudly.

Jun Wu Xie gave Qiao Chu a chilling stare.

"Without me, you would not be able to even enter the Zephyr Academy."

The Zephyr Academy set extremely high standards for their disciples' enrollment and their fees were also eye poppingly exorbitant!

With that statement from Jun Wu Xie, she effectively shut out any further objections from Qiao Chu and the others immediately.

If the money did not go, they would not even be able to afford the

fees!

The next moment, Qiao Chu was slumped by Jun Wu Xie's feet crying out in gratitude: "Little Xie! You've been too kind to us already!"

Chapter 377: “Zephyr Academy (1)”

The Zephyr Academy was situated in the northern side of the Da Du Country, its terrain flat and it sat upon vast tracts of land.

It was rumoured that if you stood at the doors of the Zephyr Academy, you would not be able to see the end of it.

Being among one of the top three academies, whenever the Zephyr Academy opened their doors for enrollment in September, people from all across the lands thronged its gates and the sea of people always made for a magnificent sight.

Horse drawn carriages carrying whole families rolled in endlessly and girls and boys of suitable age were accompanied by their families from all directions, travelling thousands of miles to the Zephyr Academy. Every year, in the period between mid August to early September, not only the Zephyr Academy’s headquarters, but the surrounding towns’ inns and restaurants would be filled , overflowing with the endless rush of people coming in.

There were almost as many academies as there were stars in the skies, but only three stood at the top of the pyramid. Among the three, Zephyr took up one spot.

The top institutions had always set a very strict criteria for their enrollment. They would only accept youths between fourteen to sixteen years of age and any applicants who did not fall within this category were turned away without exception.

The Zephyr Academy was separated into the main division and the branch division. The main division only admitted disciples with elite ring spirits and disciples who showed exceptional growth in their spiritual powers. Anyone who possessed average talents could only dream of gaining entry into the main division.

The criteria for the branch division was a little more relaxed. Basically anyone who could afford the fees would gain the chance

to study under the branch division. If anyone in the branch division displayed great aptitude and excelled in the branch division, they would be promoted into the main division immediately. While those who remain average, would stay and finish their studies for the rest of the one year given to them. If they do not get into the main division before the year is up, at the spring the next semester, they would all be thrown out of the academy.

When the youths are enrolled into the school, they would be expected to pay upfront the full fees for three years, and even if they were to be dismissed early due to their lack of talent, there would be no refund of the money paid up.

Basically, among all the first years enrolled into the academy, only tens of them would be accepted into the main division and the remaining disciples usually numbering more than a thousand, would be thrown into the branch division.

Only at fourteen, would a person's ring spirit awake and the Zephyr Academy capped the age of the disciples who were eligible to apply at sixteen. That would also mean that for anyone who would attempt to make use of that two year gap to train vigorously to enhance their powers gunning for a spot in the main division, the short time frame would not be sufficient for them to make any significant difference in assessing their talent.

For those youths directly accepted into the main division, almost all of them had gotten in due to their unusual ring spirits.

The reason that the Zephyr Academy was able to secure a spot among the highly competitive top three academy rankings was due to the robust portfolios of their teachers, and more importantly, it was their unique, one of a kind field of development, the Spirit Healer!

The academy was split into three faculties that pursued three different fields. The beast spirit, weapon spirit and lastly the spirit

healers.

The beast spirit faculty accepted only disciples with beast ring spirits, the weapons spirit faculty only disciples with weapon ring spirits. The spirit healer faculty did not discriminate against the type of ring spirits their disciples possessed nor the might of the ring spirits. They picked disciples who were more inclined towards development towards the healing of the spirit.

The ring spirits and their human master's soul were joined as one and although ring spirits did not bleed, prolonged battles or accidental damage could bring about trauma or injuries to the ring spirits. It might not result in their death but it might bring about a drastic decrease in their power during battles. And the group of spirit healers existed here for this very reason.

Spirit healers was just becoming a fast rising star as an highly desired occupation and the Zephyr Academy was the only academy that knew how to groom a spirit healer.

It was common knowledge everywhere that spirit healers were now more sought after than elixir producing healers!

There were many who were able to cultivate elixirs but very few people possessed knowledge in the healing of ring spirits, and the importance people placed on their ring spirits were undeniable and irreplaceable.

To be a spirit healer, it was not a necessity to possess strong spiritual powers, but rather it needed the person's spiritual powers was able to fuse well with ring spirits. In a nutshell, a spirit healer used his own spiritual powers to restore a ring spirit's deficiency to their original power.

Chapter 378: “Zephyr Academy (2)”

Fusing your spiritual powers with a ring spirit by itself was already an incredible notion and had never been tried before. Needless to say, no one else knew how to carry it out. That was the reason why the Zephyr Academy was the one and only place under the skies that one could learn to become a spirit healer.

Even if only a single person in the family successfully becomes a spirit healer, their entire family would be able to live a life of luxury.

Among all the hopeful youths that had come to the Zephyr Academy, at least eight or nine out of ten of them targeted to become a spirit healer.

A wide sea of young youths were currently crowded before the gates of the Zephyr Academy.

They were all craning their necks, huddled in small groups, whispering among themselves. You could see the smiling faces, all eager with anticipation.

A tiny figure darted quickly through the huge crowd, squeezing past several groups of people and finally stopped under a tree that was less crowded. Under that tree, four other figures were waiting patiently.

Qiao Chu held a piece of paper in his hand, his face was gloomy as he walked up to his companions. “Is this an institution of learning or is this place a money grabbing slaughterhouse? They are slaughtering people without batting an eyelid!”

“What is it?” Fei Yan asked, looking at Qiao Chu, her eyes blinking in incomprehension.

Qiao Chu shoved the piece of paper over to them and Fei Yan looked at it with his other companions.

Their faces all turned dark at the same time.

“The fees for three years..... Three hundred thousand..... And lodging and meals not included!? This..... this is outright robbery!!” Fei Yan stared at the piece of paper, his eyes wide with incredulity.

To this motley gang who needed to even split one tael carefully between themselves to spend, three hundred thousand taels was a figure that was impossible for them to grasp.....

They wouldn't be able to raise that amount even if you sold all of them.

At that moment, all their eyes turned to the smallest figure among them all, looking at Jun Wu Xie, the only one among them with any money!

“Little Xie..... the money.....” Qiao Chu eyes was almost going to tear.

For all five of them, it would come up to a staggering one and a half million taels. And that was just to be enrolled into the academy and they had not included the fees for food and lodging. Looking at the astronomical sum the academy was asking, they estimated that they would need at least two whole million taels or they should not even think about it.

Jun Wu Xie raised her head amongst the expectant looks thrown at her and she replied in a calm voice: “Not enough.”

“.....”

The other four were thunderstruck. Such an imaginable sum, even the Mr Moneybags among them did not have enough.

When Jun Wu Xie set out from the Qi Kingdom, she had a little bit more than a million taels on her. She had splurged most of her money while in the Phoenix Academy and she had only eight hundred thousand on her now, which was less than half of the amount they needed for the enrollment for five of them.

“How beastly!? Such a ridiculous amount for their fees and the

place is still so packed! Do they all just dredge up the money from the sea?” Qiao Chu stared at the wall to wall sea of people and his heart started to bleed as he counted the unimaginable sum involved here with more than a thousand applicants before him. Out of those, only less than ten percent of them would be selected to to be admitted into the main division. The other ninety percent of them would just be throwing good money into the sea.

Three hundred thousand taels. Enough to allow a well to do family to live a life without worries. Gambling such a large amount of money betting on a kid’s potential almost broke Qiao Chu’s fragile glass heart.

“If their fees were not set that high, I think even if the Zephyr Academy’s campus were to be ten times bigger, they still would not have enough space for the wave of disciples that would come here.” Hua Yao reasoned with a soft voice.

The only place that provides a cradle for aspiring spirit healers. That point alone was enough for hordes of people to fight for a spot in the academy.

“But..... we still do not have that much money.....” Qiao Chu’s shoulders slumped immediately.

Jun Wu Xie’s eyes narrowed and she asked suddenly: “Is there an auction house anywhere near here?”

Qiao Chu was startled by Jun Wu Xie’s question.

“Little Xie, why would you want to go to an auction house? We do not have anything valuable on us to put up for sale.” The most expensive things they had on them were those clothes from the Moon Weavers Pavilion they were wearing and even if they sold them, it would not contribute the least bit to the amount they needed.

“Just tell me.” Jun Wu Xie insisted.

Chapter 379: “Zephyr Academy (3)”

“There is one around here somewhere, but we’ve never been there before.” Qiao Chu replied, scratching at his head. They’ve been to the pawnshop often enough, but the auction house..... They’ve no experience with it.

It was more than a million taels and it was not easy to raise such a sum. They had rushed to make it here by September and the Zephyr Academy was open for enrollment only three days. If they missed it, they would have to wait till next year.

Many of the people in the Zephyr Academy were highly skilled that made even Qiao Chu and the others hesitate to just rush in recklessly.

While the five of them were huddled together discussing how they were going to raise the enough money, several youths who were walking past the tree heard them and exclaimed in loud voices dripping with scorn.

“If you do not have the money, you shouldn’t even come here to the Zephyr Academy. You can’t even afford to pay such a pittance for the fees and need the auction house to tide you through!? You guys are such country bumpkins! Let me set you straight here. Even if you were to get to the auction house, it will be of no use! There is only one auction house around here and they will start their next auction three days later, so it will not help you even if you get there now.” The youth wore clothes fully adorned with gold and jade accessories and the several other youths tagging along behind him snickered loudly as the gaudily dressed youth spoke.

Anyone who came to the Zephyr Academy for its yearly enrolment had already

“Poor penniless people should just pluck theirs heads out of those clouds of daydream as the Zephyr Academy isn’t the place for any

lost stray cats and dogs.” The gaudily dressed youth turned and walked off after that.

Qiao Chu’s face darkened at that moment and Hua Yao held him back by his shoulders and shook his head.

“His words might be hard to stomach but he has nevertheless saved us a wasted trip and we now know the auction house is also no longer an option.” Rong Ruo said as she sighed in resignation. Compared to the Zephyr Academy, it was now painfully obvious to them how poverty stricken the Phoenix Academy really was.

“What do we do now then?” Fei Yan asked.

Jun Wu Xie’s eyes narrowed again as she fell deep in thought and suddenly asked of Fei Yan: “Where has Mu Chen been all this while?”

After the Qing Yun Clan was obliterated, she had stayed at the Phoenix Academy and had not paid much attention to what was going on outside. Over the past month, Jun Wu Xie had noticed that Qiao Chu and the others all got their news from Fei Yan.

Fei Yan thought a moment and replied: “Mu Chen announced that the Qing Yun Clan was disbanded about two weeks ago and that had stirred up quite a commotion. He dismissed the disciples of the Outer House and only brought the disciples of the Cloud Treading Peak with him when he left, and no one knows of his whereabouts now.”

Jun Wu Xie’s eyes flashed, and she gestured to Hua Yao to come over. Jun Wu Xie whispered into his ear and Hua Yao’s face appeared greatly shocked which gradually turned into a smile.

“The idea itself is really good, but if no one here had ever met Mu Chen, then it might not work.” Hua Yao pondered on Jun Xie’s proposal and was just being cautious.

Jun Wu Xie handed a piece of ornamental jade carved into the chinese character for “cloud”. Hua Yao was stunned a moment as

he was rather familiar with jade pieces carved in such a manner. That was a piece of jade that only people who belonged to the Qing Yun Clan would come to possess.

“Little Xie, how did you come to have one of those?” Qiao Chu looked at Jun Wu Xie in surprise. When they were in the Hidden Cloud Peak, they had each kept a piece of the jade, but as they were leaving the Cloudy Peaks, Qiao Chu had not brought his back.

“I forgot to throw it out.” Jun Wu Xie replied with a shrug of her shoulders. Everything had happened all of a sudden and she did not have time to do much else then. When she awoke, she was already in the Phoenix Academy and the piece of jade had just remained together with her other belongings.

She did not expect to be able to put it to good use today.

Chapter 380: “The Elder Appears (1)”

The bright sun was at its zenith and the place was crowded with people. It was the first day for the Zephyr Academy’s enrollment of new disciples and everyone was rushing towards the gates to secure a spot for themselves. The scalding sun blasted his rays down and the heat rose, and the overly pampered young youths from wealthy and loaded families were soon moaning and groaning as sweat ran down their bodies. But in order to maintain some semblance of their dignified status, they braved the overwhelming heat through myriad ways. Especially for those in the back of the queue, they knew it would be a long wait but were unwilling to give up their spot. Their retainers soon reacted, umbrellas and parasols mushroomed, men stood under the heat fanning their little masters and mistresses. There were even some who had ice stored within their carriages and several retainers were running to and fro while they prepared ice cold pickled plum drinks.

September might not be the hottest month of the year, but the midafternoon sun nevertheless was scorching enough to make one dizzy with its heat.

There were several young girls who suffered from a weaker constitution, fainted on the spot, and were carried into their horse carriages to escape the heat.

The heatwaves soon drove the excited crowd into silence. Those youths who were chattering away were overwhelmed by the heat and the only sounds they made were only orders for their retainers to keep fanning, quickly losing the mood for any useless chatter.

It was in that silence that a loud and excited exclamation sounded, turning all eyes towards the source of the shouting.

Everyone was agitated by the blazing heat but they still raised their heads, turning to look with frowns on their faces at two

figures under a large tree. A tall dignified figure dressed in white was standing with his hands behind his back under that tree and a extremely excited youth stood before him with his hands clasped over his own mouth. The excited shout seemed to have come from the youth.

The youths in the queue before the academy were all looking to see what had caused the commotion and what the excited youth said after that made them all prick up their ears and gave all their attention to what was happening under that tree.

“Mu Chen! Aren’t you Mu Chen, the Elder of the Qing Yun Clan!? I’ve found you here at last, Elder Mu! I beg you to sell me another one of that elixir from before. After my elder brother took it, the speed of his spiritual power development increased by leaps and bounds! I beg you! Sell me another one of that!” The excited youth pleaded loudly at the man dressed in white.

The other youths before the academy blinked their eyes as they stared in disbelief at what they had just heard from that exchange under the tree.

Their minds had exploded when they heard the three words “Qing Yun Clan” and those three words had sounded clear as thunder in their ears!

Who had not heard of the Qing Yun Clan, the top clan under the skies? And something had happened to that top clan just recently! The Elder of the Cloud Treading Peak, Mu Chen, had suddenly announced the disbandment of the Qing Yun Clan and the Sovereign and Elders of the other peaks has left. Mu Chen was the only Elder who had stayed behind and after the announcement, Mu Chen had disappeared as well and no one knew of his whereabouts.

The topmost clan had suddenly announced its disbandment and the news had stirred the entire world. Speculations had been rife but no one knew the real reason behind it.

The Qing Yun Clan's disbandment had driven many people still waiting for treatment to tears throughout the world. And on top of that, the people of the lands sought not just treatment from the Qing Yun Clan, but also for their rare elixirs!

Did that youth just call the man in white "Mu Chen"!?

Wasn't that the name of the Elder of the Cloud Treading Peak who had been the last one to leave the Qing Yun Clan?

When they realised that that man in white under the tree could be the Elder from the Qing Yun Clan, all their eyes were fixated on the scene under that tree.

The Cloud Treading Peak had been specialised in the nurturing and development of veins and arteries and not many people had seen Mu Chen in person. Many of them were in doubt at what they were seeing till they spotted the jade ornament hanging from hip of the man in white. All their suspicions evaporated right at that point!

That was the jade badge carved into the "cloud" character, which was symbolic of the Qing Yun Clan!

Such badges were only carried by the Sovereign, the Elders, and disciples of the Inner House exclusively and even the disciples of the Outer House could only dream of possessing one.

The Sovereign and the various Elders had seemingly evaporated into thin air overnight and only people from the Cloud Treading Peak were ever spotted!

Chapter 381: The Elder Appears (2)

Who would dare to impersonate as an Elder of the Qing Yun Clan? No one in their right mind would dare to do it.

Moreover, that person possessed the symbolic badge of the Qing Yun Clan, leading the people witnessing the commotion to believe them.

With the disappearance of the Qing Yun Clan, the meaning behind those three words attracted attention of an unprecedented level.

The man in white looked at the pleading youth before him and said: “The Qing Yun Clan is no more and I am no longer an Elder of the Qing Yun Clan. It must be fate that we met here today. I have a few more of that elixir you want but I do not have much left. If you really want it so badly, I can part with one more for the same price that you paid previously.”

The pleading youth was ecstatic and could not stop bowing in gratitude. He reached into his sleeves and pulled out three bank notes showing an amount of one hundred thousand taels each and handed it over to “Mu Chen”.

The other youths who were watching them intently all widened their eyes. Three hundred thousand taels for one elixir!?

What kind of a price was that!?

Besides the elixirs of the Qing Yun Clan, who else was able to command such prices!?

Anyone looking to enroll into the exorbitant Zephyr Academy were from families of prodigious wealth and hundreds of thousands of taels were well within their means. They were now presented before their eyes, a chance meeting with an Elder of the disappeared Qing Yun Clan, and he had just agreed to sell an elixir from the Qing Yun Clan to that youth!

Mayhem ensued!

Groups of youths swarmed out from the queue and rushed towards the tree.

“Mu Chen” was just concluding his deal with the youth when he saw a large group of sweat drenched youths rushing towards him and before he knew it, they all knelt down at his feet.

“Elder Mu! May we ask what elixir did you just sell to that youth?” A cautious youth before “Mu Chen” asked in audacity without even stating his intentions but asking about the use and effects of the elixir impudently.

Three hundred thousand taels was not a small sum and not many elixirs across these vast lands was worth that heavenly price tag!

If they splashed such a huge sum of money but got themselves an elixir they had no use for, they would undoubtedly be shown up as fools.

“Mu Chen” stared at the crowd of youths who had suddenly surrounded him and his handsome face registered a moment of surprise but was quickly suppressed and he calmed down before saying in a soft voice: “It was just an elixir that widens your veins and arteries that speeds up the development of spiritual power in training and nothing else.”

“Mu Chen’s ” tone was nonchalant, but when those words registered in the minds of the youths, their hearts started beating faster!

Widening of the veins and arteries!?

That effect was just incredibly fascinating!!

That would mean that the progress in their future training would be faster than their peers! For elixirs such as this, its effects were better when they consume it at a young age to strengthen their foundation. The youths were all below sixteen years of age and it was the perfect time for them to consume it!

Moreover, before this, they had not known that an elixir with such effects existed!

So, who else would have the ability to produce an elixir with such heaven defying effects besides the Qing Yun Clan!?

But the Qing Yun Clan had ceased to exist and only the Heavens knew when they would meet anyone from the Qing Yun Clan again. It might turn out to be the only chance in their lifetime to buy that phenomenal elixir!

“Elder Mu!” Please grace me with one of the elixir! I’ll pay! Any amount you want!” A quick thinking youth pleaded immediately, waving a handful of bank notes in his hand!

The state of their veins and arteries would affect the future development of their spiritual powers in training, who could refuse such a heavensent opportunity?

“Elder Mu! Sell one to me too!”

“Me! Me! Elder Mu! I want one too! At whatever price!”

After the first outburst from one youth, a second youth quickly followed, and a third.....

The crowd around “Mu Chen” was still growing and the first youth who had already made a purchase was pushed out by the crowd.

The youths were all on their knees as they surged around “Mu Chen”, as wads and wads of bank notes were waved in the air, begging for just one elixir!

Chapter 382: “The Elder Appears (3)”

The youth who was pushed out behind the crowd stared at the endless wads of bank notes waving in the air and discreetly threw a thumbs up at his three other companions standing behind the tree.

The explosive shouts of demand continued for awhile more and the commotion drew more eyes to look in the direction of the tree. In moments, the neat queue before the academy broke as many more youths rushed to come under the tree.

“Mu Chen” suddenly stated that the demand was too overwhelming and he had only four more elixirs with him.

Upon hearing that, the crowd erupted in chaos!

It would be reasonable that elixirs with such astounding effects would be rare and its quantity extremely limited. But since they had chanced upon such an opportunity so hard to come by, they were not prepared to lose it!

While the price was previously set at three hundred thousand taels previously, the overwhelming demand pushed the price up and it rocketed to five hundred thousand taels easily for each elixir sold.

After the four elixirs were sold out, the rest of the disappointed youths refused to give up and continued to pester for other elixirs to be sold to them as pity for not being able to get one of those four elixirs.

That’s right, they asked to be pitied.....

Hundreds of thousand taels splashed out and they feel “Mu Chen” sold them the elixirs out of pity.

Those elixirs would change their life completely and with their families’ prodigious wealth behind them, the money spent would barely be a drop in the sea.

However, Elder “Mu Chen” said that he was cleared out of elixirs and a wail of despair subsequently swept through the youths before they dispersed in dejection.....

As “Mu Chen” left, many pairs of eyes were staring at his back in regret.

All but four pairs. Four youths were laughing hilariously behind the tree.

“Little Xie! That was just too wicked! With each elixir, you swindled them of five hundred thousand taels! We got ourselves two million taels with just those four elixirs! The returns were just astronomical!” Qiao Chu looked at those youths staring forlornly at “Mu Chen’s” back as he departed and he laughed even harder then. Qiao Chu wondered if those youths ever find out that the “Mu Chen” they saw was actually Hua Yao in disguise, what kind of thoughts would go through their minds.....

Hua Yao’s ability to freely control his bones coupled with Jun Xie’s talent at changing a person’s outlook enabled them to imitate anyone they met completely and they had absolutely no problem copying the looks of Mu Chen whom they had close contact with in the Qing Yun Clan!

“I spotted the kid who mocked us before and he managed to win one of the elixirs from us. Hahaha..... If he only knew that he spent five hundred thousand taels to purchase an ordinary elixir, I wonder if he would vomit out blood then!” Qiao Chu felt better the more he thought about it. Jun Xie’s underhanded scheme was really too much! If anyone else had claimed to possess such Heaven defying elixirs, no one would have believed a word of it. But they had brought out Mu Chen of the Qing Yun Clan, who specialised in veins and arteries, to make that claim, which lent undeniable credence to their words.

No matter how rotten the Qing Yun Clan was in reality, in the eyes of the people throughout the lands, they were the epitome of

Medicine!

Jun Wu Xie stared at the guffawing Qiao Chu and said in a chill voice: “Those were not ordinary elixirs.”

“WHAT?” Qiao Chu was stupefied.

Fei Yan who heard Jun Wu Xie looked at her in shock while she asked: “Little Xie, you mean those elixirs would really change the state of their veins and arteries!?”

Jun Wu Xie nodded.

Qiao Chu and the others suddenly became speechless.

All these youths in Lower Realm claimed they had not heard of it, even the four of them who were from the Middle Realm did not know that elixirs that could change the state of veins and arteries even existed!

“You..... you mean it’s real!?” Qiao Chu still had not recovered from the shock. He had thought that the elixirs they sold were ordinary elixirs and never in his wildest dreams would he expect them to possess the effects they had claimed!

Jun Wu Xie nodded again.

“HOW CAN THIS BE!!!?” Qiao Chu shouted in disbelief. His shout shocked Hua Yao who was just returning to the group after shedding his disguise.

Chapter 383: “The Elder Appears (4)”

“What’s going on here?” Hua Yao asked as he looked at Qiao Chu’s shocked face and then at Fei Yan’s and Rong Ruo’s perplexed expressions.

Qiao Chu was incapable of speech and could only raise a heavily shaking finger to point at Jun Wu Xie.

Rong Ruo cleared her throat before she could speak and said: “Little Xie said..... Those elixirs we sold were real.”

Even the usually calm Hua Yao paled at the news.

“Jun Xie, you cultivated those pills?” It was Hua Yao’s turn to stare in incredulity at Jun Xie as he asked again, still unable to believe his ears. When Jun Xie had suggested that he impersonated Mu Chen and use the famed name of the Qing Yun Clan to peddle those elixirs, he had thought the very same way as his companions that Jun Xie had intended to hoodwink the disgustingly rich brats here with mere common elixirs and he would never have expected that.....

That little kid had given him the real deal..... Those elixirs’ effects were as they claimed!

Jun Wu Xie nodded slightly and her eyes were expressionless. She did not understand why a few elixirs would elicit such dramatic reactions from her companions.

Even Hua Yao who was already mentally prepared found himself unable to respond to Jun Xie’s honest reply that had thrown a bolt at him.

The four pairs of eyes that stared at Jun Wu Xie were incredulous. Was this kid really from the Lower Realm? They were the ones from the Middle Realm..... How was their Little Xie pulling out all these elixirs that they had never even knew existed?

Jun Wu Xie looked at her four companions staring at her as if she

were some hideous monster. She was silent a moment before she reached into her cosmos bag and pulled out a white porcelain bottle.

“You want it?”

All at the same time, four pairs of eyes sparkled brightly!

They had just seen a similar bottle earlier, it looked just like the bottle Jun Xie had handed to Hua Yao to peddle.

As to what was inside, they all only knew too well by now.

“It..... It’s really for us?” Qiao Chu asked swallowing noisily and he could not take his eyes off the white porcelain bottle in Jun Xie’s hand.

Jun Wu Xie pushed the bottle that contained the Heaven defying elixirs into Qiao Chu’s hand without a word.

To her, it was just some excess elixirs left over from the batches she had cultivated for the Rui Lin Army, and did not matter much.

At that time, Jun Wu Xie had singlehandedly cultivated one hundred thousand elixirs just like those for the Rui Lin Army!

Jun Wu Xie herself was surprised that her elixirs would sell so well. She had never had to worry about money and she did not even consider how much her elixirs were worth. The figure she gave Hua Yao earlier was based entirely on the amount they needed. She had absolutely no idea if they were worth that much or not.

But the chaos that ensued had proven it.....

Worth every cent!

Jun Wu Xie might have unilaterally decided to steal Mu Chen identity, but she had no intention of sullyng the man’s name as he made his way towards the Qi Kingdom’s Imperial City.

When the thought of the Qi Kingdom came to mind, Jun Wu Xie’s head lowered. She had gotten Ye Sha to send news to Jun Wu

Yao, and to have Jun Wu Yao inform the Jun Family's father and son that she had embarked on a journey of training with her Master, and there was no need to worry about her.

But Jun Wu Xie's spontaneous little "fund raiser" though unintentional, brought about quite a bit of headache for Mu Chen.

As till far into the future, news of Mu Chen's ability to cultivate those Heaven defying elixirs spread throughout the Lower Realm and when these elixir hungry people heard that Mu Chen was in the Qi Kingdom's Lin Palace, they all swarmed to him, scaring Mu Chen into hiding in the Lin Palace and not daring to take a single step outside.

That is the future, and would not be discussed now.

Now, they had the money. The five of them did not have to worry about the fees any longer. Jun Wu Xie generously gave five hundred thousand taels to each of them and dispersed the group, to join the queue.

After the "Mu Chen" commotion died down, the queue before the Zephyr Academy regained its order.

Chapter 384: “The Elder Appears (5)”

Alas.....

After queueing for one whole day, the five of them did not even manage to touch the Zephyr Academy’s gates. In the midst of the sea of people, Jun Wu Xie decided to leave and stood on one side. The Zephyr Academy’s enrollment would cease when night fell and resume the next morning. She watched as the sun made its way down towards the horizon and decided that they did not stand a chance today.

Just as the sun was about to set, a group of people dressed in white clothes trimmed in blue came out through the gates of the Zephyr Academy. The man leading them looked to be in his early thirties, his face upright with a pair of eyes brimming with energy. The others behind him were all youths between eighteen and nineteen years of age and they all wore on their chests a jade emblem carved into the shape of a star.

When the group stepped out through the gates of the Zephyr Academy, all the youths who had been in the queue for one whole day suddenly became excited.

“Where is the Qing Yun Clan’s Elder Mu?” The leader of the group asked of the guards standing at the gates.

One of the guards whispered a few words and the man’s eyes frowned, his face a look of disappointment. With a heavy sigh, he brought the group back inside the academy.

Fei Yan watched on hidden behind the other youths and with his pretty looks which did not determine his sex, he went one round within the crowd and came back to assemble with Jun Wu Xie and the others after that.

“Looks like Little Xie’s bait not only won us money, it had also baited a big fish.” Fei Yan said with a smile as he leaned against a

tree branch.

“What did you find out?” Qiao Chu asked excitedly.

Fei Yan did not play coy and shared all that she gathered: “That man who just came out is one of the teachers from the weapons spirits branch. The Headmaster of the Zephyr Academy has one son who suffered from a weak constitution and has been sickly from a young age. He has been kept alive with the help of countless medication taken daily and the Headmaster’s various rare and treasured herbs and elixirs. As the young master’s body is weak and he is unable to undertake long journeys, the Headmaster had kept him at home to strengthen him up. The son had finally recovered enough to make a trip to the Qing Yun Clan for Qing Yue to treat him when unexpectedly, the Qing Yun Clan disbanded! That man earlier must have gotten wind of Mu Chen’s appearance and rushed out to take a look, but a pity.....”

Fei Yan’s smile was wide as he related the information to the others. Wherever there are crowds, he could always get the information he needed.

“Hey, do you think if the Headmaster of the Zephyr Academy finds out that the very same culprits responsible for the annihilation of the Qing Yun Clan are currently applying to enter his academy, would he send all his men to come kill us off?” Qiao Chu added fuel to the fire with a laugh.

The Qing Yun Clan was not as benevolent as they seemed, to get Qin Yue to help, one would need to pay a heavy price.

“Definitely! But Little Ruo and me would be fine though. As for you.....” Fei Yan said with a wicked laugh.

But on the other hand, the Headmaster’s son must suffer from bad luck. Having lived for so many years, he was unable to recover enough. And his body only chose to become well enough for travel just after Jun Wu Xie annihilated them.

It was such a shame.

“I heard that the Headmaster had resorted to inviting prodigious doctors to come to the Zephyr Academy to treat his son and no one knows whether that had yielded and improvements.” Fei Yan said, rubbing his chin thoughtfully as his eyes turned.

Right after Fei Yan said that, the eyes of the other three fell at the same time onto the tiny figure of Jun Xie.

Prodigious doctor?

Wasn't this small framed petite figure beside them the most prodigious doctor with hidden talents!?

After seeing Jun Xie treat Qiao Chu and Hua Yao and they had almost knelt and completely prostrated themselves before his skills in Medicine.

Jun Xie looked up to face the stares thrown at him and simply turned to walk towards the inn they had arranged accommodations at earlier.

“It's late.”

He didn't seem to be interested at all!

Chapter 385: “Enrollment (1)”

Back at the inn, Fei Yan handed a clear and sparkling crystal to Jun Wu Xie.

“The Zephyr Academy enrollment calls for a check on your ring spirit. You don’t need to summon it but just to put your hand on this and it will make a copy of your ring spirit and ascertain its grade. It would be better if you used the little black cat in place of the lotus.” Fei Yan had found out everything there was to know for the enrollment in half a day’s time and there was nothing to be worried about for the others but only that Jun Xie’s ring spirit must not be exposed.

“Qiao Chu told me that the little black cat is also your ring spirit. You should give it a try.” Jun Xie’s little black cat’s origins had been a mystery and Fei Yan together with the others had not asked too much about it.

Jun Wu Xie nodded and after Fei Yan left, she put her hand on the crystal. A very faint image of a lotus soon appeared in the crystal, so faint it was almost unnoticeable.

Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes and opened up her cosmos bag to take out a huge sealed sphere. The bottom half of the sphere was filled with water from the Heaven’s Spring and the Snow Lotus sat upon the water’s surface within the sphere.

When she left the Phoenix Academy, Jun Wu Xie had brought the Snow Lotus with her as she had the Heaven’s Flask with her and she did not need to worry that she would run out of the water from the Heaven’s Spring.

It was because the Snow Lotus was not within Jun Wu Xie’s body that the crystal had formed such a fuzzy image, but the shape of a lotus flower could still be seen faintly.

Jun Wu Xie had experienced first hand what disaster the

knowledge of the existence of a plant ring spirit within her could bring. The human skin maps showing the location of the Dark Emperor's tomb originated from seven of the Twelve Palaces. Now that it was known that a portion of the map existed within the Zephyr Academy, she was certain that they had received the map from the Twelve Palaces. Jun Wu Xie's eyes flared with a cold chill. The Zephyr Academy must have some secret link with one of the Twelve Palaces.

Fei Yan had understood the dangers involved and had brought the crystal earlier to Jun Wu Xie for her to prepare for it.

Using the little black cat in replacement for her real ring spirit. Jun Wu Xie had never attempted that before and she could only feel her way around on her own. She concentrated her spiritual power onto her hand. When Jun Wu Xie placed her hand on the crystal once again, the faint image of the lotus disappeared and in its place, a translucent image of a little cat showed up within.

It had taken her only moments, but the concentration and effort needed made her short of breath after.

The little black cat was still in a coma and its soul was close to complete exhaustion. Jun Wu Xie had not dared to move it much and could only employ the link her soul had with the little black cat as a cover up. Her own soul was not in any better shape and with that short period of utilisation of her soul's powers had completely drenched her back.

She wore a fake replica of a ring on her finger and Jun Wu Xie laid back on the chair to catch her breath.

Early the next morning, Jun Wu Xie and her companions proceeded to go to the Zephyr Academy. Due to the expected large number of people there for the enrollment, the five companions decided to split up.

As it was still early when they reached, there were not many people at the gates. The five companions were able to find

themselves separate stations to carry out the checks in a short period of time. Jun Wu Xie went to the station at the extreme end and the man behind the station looked at Jun Wu Xie head to toe before he impatiently stretched out his hand to dangle a crystal before Jun Wu Xie's eyes.

Jun Wu Xie pressed her hand upon the crystal without a word and pushed her soul power into it. Immediately, a translucent image of a cat appeared within the crystal and the man cast a nonchalant glance at it and said: "Beast spirit..... Wait!"

The man seemed to have noticed something and the lazy look on his face disappeared. He stared questioningly at the translucent image in the crystal and when he turned his eyes to look at Jun Wu Xie, his eyes seemed to be searching for something on her.

"Infuse your spiritual power into this crystal." The man took out another crystal and put it before Jun Wu Xie once more.

Chapter 386: “Enrollment (2)”

Jun Wu Xie closed her eyes and pushed her spiritual power into the crystal.

A blindingly bright orange glow exploded at that moment and the light attracted the attention of all the youths who had come for the enrollment before the academy’s gates!

Qiao Chu and the others who were making their way over to come find Jun Xie after they had completed their enrollment were shocked when they saw the explosion of orange light!

That bright light had drawn everyone’s attention and all their eyes were staring at Jun Xie in surprise.

Orange!?

The spirit stone was glowing orange!?

That would mean that small kid’s spiritual powers had reached the the orange level?

Among everyone there, they could find no one of a smaller size. His looks showed that he was still at a very tender age and he was so tiny and skinny. It was obvious he was one of the youngest there and if not for the fact that ring spirits awaken only at the age of fourteen, with the way he looked, everyone would think he was still maybe twelve or thirteen!

But the fact that the youngest looking one among them had achieved the orange level slapped them across their faces!

A murmur of voices guessing his actual age broke out among the crowd.

Fei Yan who had been walking in that direction slapped his hand on his forehead when he saw the orange light.

“It’s over! This time, it’s all over!”

The Zephyr Academy’s enrollment usually only called for a check

on the ring spirits, and it was only when the applicant himself declared that he had achieved a breakthrough that the academy would conduct another test. As people who were able to achieve a breakthrough in their spiritual power at ages between fourteen to sixteen were extremely rare, no one hid that fact if they had achieved such a feat.

Qiao Chu and the others had decided to start their search from the branch division as they were confident that they were able to advance into the main division easily with their abilities when they chose, they had therefore kept silent on their spiritual powers.

But they had not expected for Jun Xie to meet with this unexpected turn of events.

Why had the Zephyr Academy suddenly asked to test the level of Jun Xie's spiritual power?

A fourteen year old achieving the orange level in his spiritual power. Needless to say, he would be admitted into the main division without question!

However, the other four had completed their enrollments and they had already received their emblems for the branch division, it was already too late for them to change!

In the end, the man who had conducted the tests for Jun Xie gave him a thoughtful glance and finally turned to whisper to his fellow staff of the academy before that staff ran off quickly.

After awhile, an attractive looking man dressed in a light blue brocaded robe walked slowly to the main gates. He followed the direction that the orange light was coming from and walked towards Jun Wu Xie.

Jun Wu Xie was nevertheless composed while her eyes were cold and clear.

The blue robed man raised an eyebrow when he saw Jun Wu Xie and he reached out his hand to hold Jun Wu Xie's wrist just above

the hand that held the spirit stone.

Qiao Chu and the others readied themselves as they watched hidden among the many other youths.

Jun Wu Xie narrowed her eyes but did not react any further.

The man only held on to Jun Wu Xie's wrist and did not do anything else. After a moment, he smiled and said: "A orange spirit at fourteen, a rather amazing seedling I must say."

At that man's words, the crowd erupted into an uproar!

Achieving the orange level at sixteen years old was already uncommon but would not be that shocking, but achieving orange at fourteen.....

It was just absolutely insane!

At fourteen years, what were most people doing?

With their ring spirits just awoken, they would just be learning how to train and develop their powers and trying to understand the capabilities of their ring spirits, taking no less than half a year to do that. And after they were ready to embark on the actual training, they would require a long period of time to adapt and adjust before they take the first step into their brand new journey to power.

For a fourteen year old to achieve the orange level was monstrous.....

And they had never encountered anything like this before!

Who would have thought that such an unimpressive looking brat would achieve such Heaven forbidding speed in the development of his spiritual powers!?

Chapter 387: “Enrollment (3)”

Even with everyone’s eyes staring at her, Jun Wu Xie still did not react in the slightest. She could feel that the man dressed in blue robes before her was not weak, and based on how the others from the Zephyr Academy were deferring to him, it was not difficult to ascertain that the position the man held was rather high.

“With such gift, you’ll be directly admitted into the main division.” The blue robed man said candidly with a laugh and put Jun Wu Xie straight into the main division.

His words drove many of the youths present green with envy.

Every year, an extremely small number of applicants gained direct entry into the main division. The other youths might have been envious, but they knew they had not achieved an orange level in their spiritual power. The blue robed man had not given the boy any preferential treatment. For a fourteen year old to have broken through to the orange level and be admitted directly into the main division was only to be expected.

Among the youths before the academy, not all of them were just plain envious. Qiao Chu and his other companions almost vomited out blood when the blue robed man directly admitted Jun Wu Xie into the main division. Now, what was to happen to them who had already been admitted into the branch division!?

Their tests had ended and they couldn’t go back and tell the academy that they wanted their tests to be done one more time.....

The blue robed man thought that the little kid before him would be ecstatic to hear his words but was instead surprised that the cold and chill expression did not change a single bit, and that made him look at Jun Wu Xie differently.

A person’s gift might be hard to come by, but if their personality were overly arrogant or confident, it would impede their progress

in their development in training. He had seen quite a few highly gifted youths to shine with brilliance at the onset, but faced countless obstacles in their training as they progressed. In the beginning, the development and progress in training towards their spiritual power was easiest to attain and that gift would easily breeze them through the earlier breakthroughs. But as they progressed to the later levels, the demand on one's natural temperament becomes higher as the training process becomes dry and dull and took long periods of time. If they could not last the tedium and succumbed to the temptations of flowery and carnal world, no matter how high their gift was, they would not be able to progress further.

In the end, they would turn out to be someone whom people whispered behind their back, as one who was highly gifted at a young age, but had squandered it all to amount to nothing.

“Little one, what's your name?” The blue robed man asked with a smile.

“Jun Xie.” Jun Wu Xie replied simply.

The blue robed man laughed.

At the moment that the man's laughter sounded, Jun Wu Xie felt a sudden warmth flow from the hand clasped over her wrist into her incessantly and she froze.

“Relax, you do not have to worry. With such outstanding gift, if your ring spirit were to be damaged, it would be such a waste.” The man's soft whisper that was tinged with laughter sounded in her ear.

Jun Wu Xie raised her head, and her cold eyes reflected the man's attractive countenance.

The flow of warmth was almost unnoticeable as the energy fused into her soul, spreading towards the part that belonged to the little black cat's soul.

Jun Wu Xie's eyes flashed briefly in amazement. She could clearly feel that the black cat's exhausted soul was recovering very gradually under the flow of warmth, and gaining a little more life bit by bit!

A Spirit Healer!

Jun Wu Xie's mind suddenly flashed with those three words.

The little black cat might be a little different from other ring spirits, but they were basically the same in spirit form. If a Spirit Healer can heal ring spirits, that must also mean they can heal the little black cat's soul!

At that time, the Snow Lotus was not within Jun Wu Xie's body and the only other spirit within her body was only the little black cat!

The energy from the warmth was slowly and unendingly lending nourishment to the little black cat's soul!

Was this the power of a Spirit Healer? Jun Wu Xie's eyes were showing a rare expression of amazement and it was no wonder the Spirit Healers of the Zephyr Academy enjoyed greater prominence than any other faculties. If with a Spirit Healer in their midst, people when in battle, need no longer be so restrained as when their ring spirits were injured, they could be healed and prolong the time they can contribute in battle!

Chapter 388: “Enrollment (4)”

After some time, the man dressed in blue released Jun Wu Xie’s hand, and his attractive face was rather pale, with a thin sheen of sweat covering his brows.

The people from the Zephyr Academy around the man saw that the man dressed in blue was showing signs of exhaustion and stepped up to hold him.

The man dressed in blue waved them off gently and insisted for them to step back.

The healing of the little kid’s ring spirit took up far more of his energy than he had expected and he had not needed to deplete such a severe amount of his energies for a long time. It had felt like he had not just treated an injured ring spirit but more like he had almost resurrected a ring spirit from the brink of death.

The man laughed bitterly inwardly, on the one rare occasion he had decided to show a bit of benevolence, he had to meet with such a trying incident. He could have pulled back halfway when he had first felt uncomfortable, but he did not know why, when he looked onto the face of the little kid before him, and that boy’s eyes had showed that tiny flash of amazement, he could not make himself hold back but had soldiered on with the healing.

To the point that he was now finally drained and feeling rather exhausted.

“I’m tired, all of you can just carry on.” The man dressed in blue rejected the offers of help and just looked at Jun Wu Xie once more before he turned and left.

Jun Wu Xie could feel that gradually strengthening spirit within her body. She looked up in gratitude, stared at the retreating back of the man dressed in blue and said: “Thank you.”

The man dressed in blue stopped in his tracks and turned around.

He looked at Jun Wu Xie's expressionless face and replied with a smile: "There's no need. You are now a disciple of the Zephyr Academy and as a Master here, I should naturally help a little with the recruitment. You are Jun Xie right? If you are interested, after you are admitted, come to the Spirit Healers faculty to look for me. My name is Gu Li Sheng."

After that, Gu Li Sheng turned and walked away without stopping, feeling a tad bit unsteady.

Gu Li Sheng? Spirit Healers Faculty? Jun Wu Xie was still considering Gu Li Sheng's parting words when the crowd before the Zephyr Academy's gate suddenly broke into an uproar!

If all the youths at the gates of the Zephyr Academy were just envious of Jun Wu Xie previously, the youths after hearing Gu Li Sheng's words had suddenly turned their envy into unbridled jealous rage!

Gu Li Sheng! That was the founder of the Spirit Healers faculty himself!

It was said that any Spirit Healers throughout the lands now had all studied under Gu Li Sheng's discipleship!

Before Gu Li Sheng, Spirit Healers had not existed before!

It was only because of Gu Li Sheng that the Zephyr Academy had the unique and highly exclusive Spirit Healer faculty!

What did that little brat Jun Xie do to be graced with such an encounter!? Just a fourteen year old orange leveled spirit did not deserve the highly revered and esteemed Gu Li Sheng come just to see him! And Gu Li Sheng had not done just that, he had actually personally invited that brat of a Jun Xie to join his Spirit Healer faculty! !

Upon hearing that, all the other youths were indignant! They all stared at Jun Xie, wishing they could swallow him whole then.

Every single one of them had fervently wished that they could be

shoved into the Spirit Healer faculty and that brat had so effortlessly been accepted into it just like that!

The brat had even captured the attention of Gu Li Sheng and that made Jun Xie already shine in brilliance before he had even stepped into the Zephyr Academy!

The furious and indignant youths had now diverted their stares filled with envy and jealousy at the two men who had brought Gu Li Sheng here. They were all enrolling into the Zephyr Academy as disciples, why would they go invite Gu Li Sheng just to come see a mere applicant just like them ! ?

The two innocent men had to suffer under the indignant and angry stares when all they did was to invite a Teacher to come take a look when they found that Jun Xie was highly gifted, but had possessed a badly weakened ring spirit. Who knew that the Teacher they found would turn out to be Gu Li Sheng and he had chosen to appear before everyone here? No one would have expected that Gu Li Sheng would find the little kid soothing to his eye and directly accepted him immediately too.....

Chapter 389: “Enrollment (5)”

Gaining admittance into the Spirit Healer faculty was totally unexpected for Jun Wu Xie herself, not to mention for all the people before the academy’s gates.

Her objective for this trip was to locate the second piece of the human skin map with Qiao Chu and the others. She had not thought..... that she would be unknowingly noticed by the founder of the Spirit Healers and invited to accept his tutelage.

Under everyone’s envious and jealous eyes, Jun Wu Xie left, her face a sea of calm and went to join Qiao Chu and the others under a huge tree as previously arranged.

But.....

The four pairs of eyes that met her were rather surprised.

“Little Xie..... Did you know that Gu Li Sheng before this?” Qiao Chu asked Jun Wu Xie immediately when she came over, unable to suppress his curiosity even for a moment.

Jun Wu Xie replied unhesitatingly: “Never met him.”

“You’ve never met him?” Qiao Chu’s eyes widened in surprise.

“What did he do to you earlier?” Rong Ruo surveyed Jun Xie head to toe and after seeing that Jun Xie looked fine, she was finally relieved.

“Healed my spirit.” Jun Wu Xie said simply.

Shock showed on all four faces.

Rong Ruo asked again: “How was it?”

Jun Wu Xie did not reply but raised her hands. They saw a ball of black mist form on those hands and gradually a graceful little black cat appeared within her arms.

“Meow?”

[Did I sleep long?]

The little black cat snuggled into Jun Wu Xie's arms and closed its eyes to a slit in comfort, its long tail dangled over Jun Wu Xie's arm, swishing lazily through the air.

Jun Wu Xie lowered her head, her eyes looking at the little black cat within her arms, and the cold feeling of loss that had steeped within her for so long finally started to fade gradually.

Qiao Chu and the others had all seen the black cat before, but besides Qiao Chu and Hua Yao, Fei Yan and Rong Ruo had only seen the black cat unconscious. This was the first time they had seen the little black cat awake!

When the little black cat was brought back to the Phoenix Academy, even Yan Bu Gui had declared that the little black cat had been injured more seriously than Jun Xie and would most probably not awaken. But the little black cat was now obviously snuggled deep into Jun Xie's arms happily content, and that greatly surprised all of them!

"The world really is a vast place, people that can heal ring spirits really exist?" Hua Yao wondered, more to himself than to the others, with his eyes narrowed in thought. It wasn't just in the Lower Realm, but even in the whole of the Middle Realm, nobody had ever heard of it.

When they had first heard about the Spirit Healers, they had been rather skeptical. But the little black cat's recovery stood as a strong prime example before their very eyes and that was an undeniable fact.

"Now, the four of us have been allocated into the branch division, so Little Xie, you do not need to do anything in the main division but to just wait for us to get promoted there. Erm..... didn't that Gu Li Sheng invite you to join his Spirit Healer faculty? If you can learn the technique and become a Spirit Healer, that would just be fantastic." Fei Yan said with a laugh.

Jun Wu Xie nodded, within that period, she could learn to understand more on the methods employed for the training of her spiritual power as she had so far only relied on her innate capabilities when using her spiritual power.

The branch division conducted an appraisal every quarter and for those who displayed exemplary increase in their spiritual power within that period stood a chance to be promoted into the main division. Hua Yao and the others would have to wait at least three months after their discipleship start for them to join Jun Xie in the main division.

And that was agreed upon by the five companions under the huge tree.

For all successful applicants into the Zephyr Academy, they were to report to the Zephyr Academy on the fourth day after the start of the academy's enrollment.

Jun Wu Xie returned to the inn and put the little black cat on the table before she opened her cosmos bag to retrieve the sphere that contained the Snow Lotus.

[This little imp's injuries..... seems no less grave than what I sustained.] The little black cat sat upon the table and said with its eyes narrowed as it stared unblinkingly at the Snow Lotus. The last memory it had was the dire battle in the Cloudy Peaks, and that battle would forever remain a scar etched into its mind.

Chapter 390: “Enrollment (6)”

“I will heal him up.” Jun Wu Xie said determinedly. When they were still at the Phoenix Academy, she might not have been able to find a way and could only depend on the water from the Heaven’s Spring. But she had now personally witnessed Gu Li Sheng’s technique as a Spirit Healer and she had resolved to learn it.

The little black cat just rubbed itself against Jun Wu Xie’s hand.

.....

The three days for enrollment into the Zephyr Academy finally ended and a larger part of the youths were allocated into the branch division, while only tens of them made it into the main division.

Jun Wu Xie entered the doors to the main division with the other tens of disciples but all the way from the moment that they had all stepped in, she was ostracised and pushed out and was always at the back of the group.

The incident when Jun Wu Xie had received Gu Li Sheng’s preferential treatment had spread among the youths. All those who had been directly accepted into the main division were highly gifted and they had inevitably viewed themselves to be more privileged than others. When they had come to the Zephyr Academy, they had set their sights on gaining entry into none other than the Spirit Healer faculty but they had found that an inconspicuous brat had snatched that spot from them instead, and were feeling a tad bit bitter about it.

The youth leading the new disciples into the Zephyr Academy looked to be about eighteen or nineteen years old and he wore a jade badge carved into the shape of three stars. The youth had not spoken a single word and though one of the new disciples stepped up to him to make some small talk, the older youth had only given the young youth a cold wordless stare.

The Zephyr Academy lived up to its name as one of the top three academies throughout the lands. Every inch of the architecture within the grounds were lavishly luxurious and did not feel the least bit gaudy but classy and majestic. As they walked through the halls, the eyes of the new disciples were wide open, captured by the grandeur as they turned their heads all around, amazed by the endless spectacles of splendour.

They were finally brought to a big hall when the youth leading them stopped in his steps and turned to look at the new disciples. He proceeded to say without any expression: “Newly admitted disciples will be mentored by our senior disciples.”

Right after the older youth finished his sentence, tens of good looking and pretty youths stepped out from behind the hall. Their ages were between eighteen to nineteen years and the jade badges they wore on their chests were carved into three stars as well.

It had been the age old tradition in the Zephyr Academy that the newly admitted disciples would be mentored by their seniors to familiarise themselves in the beginning. It was a matter of course that the privilege was only extended to disciples who had passed the tests during the enrollment and were directly accepted into the main division. For those allocated into the branch division, they were left to fend for themselves.

Understanding that they would be largely dependant on their seniors in the days to come, the younger youths all raised their heads and looked longingly at the group of senior disciples before them.

“These are the new disciples for this year? I don’t see anything special about them.” One of the senior disciples said with a yawn, seemingly not entirely enthusiastic about mentoring the newly admitted juniors.

Being a mentor to new disciples sounded grand, but in reality, it was a task shunned by all the seniors.

For the young youths who had just come to the Zephyr Academy, they were completely clueless and oblivious to any of the rules there. The seniors were obligated to not only explain those rules one by one, they were also required to take time out from their training to guide their allocated juniors. Such an uncalled for task was boring and a waste of time to them, and moreover, once they took up the task, they were stuck with them for at least two years before they could rid themselves of the baggage.

Unless the seniors were specifically picked, none of them were willing to accept such a thankless task.

It was due to these factors that made these seniors of the Zephyr Academy unable to make themselves show any goodwill towards the newly admitted disciples and instead look at them with disdain.

Nevertheless, the seniors did not have much of a choice in the matter and they quickly chose whoever looked the least displeasing from among the group of juniors.

Their criteria for their choices were simple. It was based on age. The older they were, the more independent their ward was expected to be, and the younger they were, the more trouble they would be sure to cause.

Chapter 391: “Enrollment (7)”

Very soon, the seniors had quickly almost finished choosing the juniors they were to mentor and in the end, the only one left was the youngest Jun Wu Xie.

One of the senior disciples had not been fast enough to snatch up any of the older new disciples and he was now looking at Jun Wu Xie's skinny little frame from head to toe in disdain, seemingly very unwilling to pick Jun Wu Xie.

“You’re already fourteen?” The senior disciple moved to stand before Jun Wu Xie, his face exasperated.

Jun Wu Xie nodded slightly, oblivious to the senior's resentment.

“Which category is your ring spirit?” The senior then proceeded to ask.

“Beast category.”

“Sheesh.” He cursed softly and turned to the youth who had led the new disciples in and said: “My ring spirit belongs to the weapons category, so I cannot mentor this kid.”

The youth who had led the new disciples frowned with displeasure. Usually, the new disciples were paired with a senior mentor who shared the same category for their ring spirits as the methods of training differed across different categories. Even if the seniors were to accept the ward, the mentor would not be able to provide any guidance in the training of their spiritual powers.

The other new disciples who had all been paired up smiled in glee at Jun Wu Xie's predicament of being left out in the cold.

Their feelings of envy and jealousy had quickly turned into mockery.

So what if the little kid had gained Gu Li Sheng's attention? He had ended scorned by all the seniors.

The youths started sniggering softly to themselves.

Faced with the mockery from the new disciples and scorn from the seniors, Jun Wu Xie was not affected in the least and she only watched all this with a cold stare, without a ripple showing in her eyes.

“Beast category? That happens to be the same category as mine.” Suddenly a cheerful voice sounded within the huge hall and a tall, impressive and attractive youth stepped in with the morning light behind him. A smile like a clean spring breeze graced his face that made him instantly likable to people.

“Senior Fan! What are you doing here?” The senior disciple who was still trying to come up with a reason to reject Jun Wu Xie suddenly froze when he saw the tall figure enter.

Fan Jin laughed lightly and amicably patted the senior disciple’s shoulder and said: “I heard that you were all here to welcome our new fellow disciples into the Zephyr Academy and I thought I had to come see them too.”

Upon saying that, Fan Jin’s gaze fell onto Jun Wu Xie, who was standing alone on one side. His eyes surveyed Jun Wu Xie up and down before everyone and he asked with bright smile: “Has any senior claimed you yet?”

Jun Wu Xie looked coldly at Fan Jin, but did not reply.

The little black cat within Jun Wu Xie was raging to jump out at him.....

[What do you mean by claim!?!]

[My mistress isn’t anyone’s property!]

The last remaining senior coughed consciously and said: “Senior Fan, I would love to accept the kid, but..... our ring spirits are from different categories and even if I am to accept him, I would only hamper his progress in training.” His prior arrogance and disdain had suddenly disappeared before Fan Jin and appeared to be very

concerned for Jun Wu Xie's welfare.

Fan Jin laughed and waved his hand dismissively to say: "You don't have to worry about that. Since your ring spirits belongs to different categories, leave the kid in my care. It's been some time since I mentored a junior anyway."

Fan Jin spoke as he looked at Jun Wu Xie, with an amicable smile on his face throughout.

"What? Senior Fan..... You..... you are going to mentor him?" The senior asked with his eyes wide with shock, thinking he might have heard Fan Jin wrongly.

"Yes! I think I like the little kid and can mentor him." Fan Jin said with a laugh.

Chapter 392: “Enrollment (8)”

In an instant, the sound of deep breaths taken by everyone sounded in the hall. The faces of seniors all appeared shocked.

“It getting rather late, everyone should bring the our new fellow disciples around to familiarise themselves. As for this kid, I’ll take him.” Upon saying that, Fan Jin disregarded the other seniors’ shocked expressions and tapped Jun Wu Xie lightly on the shoulder and signalled for him to follow as he turned to leave the hall.

Although Jun Wu Xie did not know who this “senior Fan” who had suddenly appeared out of the blue was, but when she compared him to the rest of the seniors on the halls, this guy was a much better choice.

Even after Fan Jin had led Jun Wu Xie far from the hall, the other seniors in the hall had still not recovered.

One of the new disciples bolstered his courage and asked the senior he had been paired with: “Senior, is there anything wrong with that senior Fan? Why are all your expressions so.....”

The senior breathed out heavily and rubbed at his temple: “That was Fan Jin, the adopted son of the Headmaster’s! And he came in fourth in the last Zephyr Academy’s Spirit Battle Tournament! What did that kid do to get so lucky to have Fan Jin agree to be his mentor! ?”

Fan Jin’s identity was unique. He not only had the halo of being the Headmaster’s adopted son, he possessed a rather strong ring spirit as well. On top of that, his training of his spiritual power left many other disciples of the Zephyr Academy in the dust.

“What! ?” Getting such a reply shocked the new disciple into shouting out in outrage.

The senior gave his junior a stare filled with impatience and

turned to walk off. His shocked junior had no other choice but to run to catch up in a hurry.

The other new juniors who heard the news stood as if struck by lightning, all their faces frozen, that senior's words repeating in their heads.

The Headmaster's adopted son..... Ranked fourth in the Spirit Battle Tournament.....

They had just been laughing at Jun Wu Xie as the hot potato that everyone avoided, but they were now completely stumped instead. No matter how oblivious they were about the inner workings of the Zephyr Academy, it was clear obvious what Fan Jin's two titles meant for his little ward.

From the way all the seniors had deferred to Fan Jin earlier, all the juniors knew that none of the seniors in the halls could even remotely compare to Fan Jin.

First it was Gu Li Sheng's preferential treatment, and next was getting claimed by Fan Jin.....

Jun Xie's good fortune made all the other juniors almost want to bang their heads against the wall in frustration, and hating the fact that none of that fortune had befallen on them!

.....

Jun Wu Xie followed behind Fan Jin to walk out of the hall quickly and continued on through the main thoroughfare through the Zephyr Academy. The pair walked with Fan Jin in front and Jun Wu Xie behind, attracting a lot of attention.

"Is your name Jun Xie?" Fan Jin asked of Jun Wu Xie walking behind him as they continued on their way.

"Yes."

"Haha, there's no need to be nervous. I am always very easygoing and it was Uncle Gu who asked me to come find you. His

description of you was spot on! Look for the smallest sized kid and it would be you.” Fan Jin had a jovial disposition and his words were always accompanied with a bit of laughter in them.

Jun Wu Xie’s steps suddenly faltered and she looked at Fan Jin’s back thoughtfully.

“What is it?” Fan Jin turned around and looked at Jun Wu Xie who had suddenly stopped.

“Nothing.” Jun Wu Xie replied, and she lowered her head to push the thoughts out of her head.

The fact that Gu Li Sheng had arranged for someone to come get her meant that he had predicted that his words spoken before everyone on the day of her enrollment would bring her quite a bit of trouble. Having made such arrangements meant that Gu Li Sheng was still keen on accepting her into the Spirit Healer Faculty, which suited her intentions fine.

The Zephyr Academy’s main division consisted of only three faculties. The Spirit Healer, the weapon ring spirit and the beast ring spirit faculties. On the surface, Jun Wu Xie’s ring spirit was a beast ring spirit, but her real ring spirit was the Snow Lotus. Even if she were to join the other faculties, it would be of no help to her anyway.

Chapter 393: “A Disagreeable Roommate (1)”

The Zephyr Academy allocates two people to a room in the dormitories. After Fan Jin brought Jun Wu Xie to claimed her uniforms, he proceeded to lead her to her room.

Within the room, a pale complexioned youth sat, his face gloomy, and his head lowered over a book by the window. When he heard steps approaching, he raised his head and cast his cheerless gaze over, a gaze that made one feel very uncomfortable. He looked at Jun Wu Xie and he frowned deeply, and when his eyes saw Fan Jin behind Jun Wu Xie, the sweeping glance stopped a moment and his eyes flashed very briefly. He averted his eyes away soon after and went back to his book without a word.

“You will live here from now onwards. I am on the seventh floor, last room on the extreme right. If there is anything you need from me, you can find me there.” Fan Jin said with a smile and gave Jun Wu Xie a reassuring pat on the shoulder.

Jun Wu Xie nodded and Fan Jin left after bidding goodbye.

Jun Wu Xie surveyed the fittings in the room and did not feel like saying anything.

The dormitories were separated for male and female disciples and female disciples in the Zephyr Academy numbered less than one to ten males.

Jun Wu Xie’s bed was on the right side and was directly across the gloomy youth’s. She was not interested in other people and proceeded to tidy up her own things.

Besides the clothes, Fan Jin had prepared some daily necessities as well in a through package.

From the time that Jun Wu Xie had entered the room till she had tidied up all her things, her roommate had not spoken a single

word. The room was deadly silent broken only by the occasional flipping pages of a book.

After a while, a youth bearing a jade emblem on his chest came in and when he saw Jun Wu Xie in the room, he was startled a moment before he walked towards the gloomy youth's side.

“Yin Yan, this kid is your new roommate?” The youth who had just come in asked of Yin Yan, whose head was still lowered over his book.

Yin Yan raised his head and nodded slightly, his expression showing a tinge of impatience.

“You're in for quite a bit of hassle. All new rookies are always such a handful when they are just admitted in here. I don't know what the Headmaster is thinking. He should just dump these rookies in the branch division to polish them up a little first. I don't know what they are here for at all.” The youth spoke mockingly, seemingly directing his words right at Jun Wu Xie.

Yin Yan replied without hesitation: “If they are so much trouble, they should learn their place.” Those words seemed to be more for Jun Wu Xie's ears than the other youth.

“Right, I heard that Senior Fan actually brought a rookie here today. What could Fan Jin be thinking! ? We are about to embark on the Spirit Hunt soon, why would he suddenly decide to drag himself down with those useless baggage?”

Yin Yan's eyes had suddenly turned malicious. His gaze fell on the Jun Wu Xie, who was quietly sitting on her bed. Jun Wu Xie had summoned the little black cat and she was leaning against the bedpost with the black cat resting on her lap, portraying a picture of serenity.

Yin Yan stood up suddenly and walked over to Jun Wu Xie.

His shadow fell over the bed and Jun Wu Xie looked up slowly, her cold eyes staring into a pair of malicious and gloomy eyes.

“The Zephyr Academy does not allow for any arbitrary summoning of ring spirits within its compound. Are you blind? Didn’t you see it in the academy’s rules?” Yin Yan voice sounded so malicious that it raised goosebumps on the other youth.

Jun Wu Xie’s eyes did not show any expression and she only stared at her aggressive new roommate without saying a word.

The youth who had entered later was surprised at Yin Yan enmity in his tone, which was glaringly obvious by now.

Although all the seniors did not like new rookies, but he felt that Yin Yan’s tone in his words had sounded a tad bit too provocative.

Jun Wu Xie said in a chillingly clear voice: “Below three feet.”

After saying that, she lowered her head and did not bother to cast another single glance at Yin Yan.

Chapter 394: “A Disagreeable Roommate (2)”

Yin Yan frowned immediately at that moment. There was a rule in the Zephyr Academy that disciples were not allowed to summon their ring spirits as they liked but there was an exception to that rule. The rule only applied to ring spirits above three feet and did not include any below.

Jun Wu Xie had just been admitted that very day and she had just flipped through the rule book a few times. Yin Yan had seized the opportunity to deliberately make things difficult for her assuming that Jun Wu Xie was not aware of the rules, but he had not expected that Jun Wu Xie not only knew about it, but had even used the only exception to that rule to shut him up, and on top of that, Jun Wu Xie’s attitude had been unbelievably arrogant!

Jun Wu Xie had indeed just flipped through the rule book just a couple of times, but what Yin Yan did not know was that Jun Wu Xie’s brain was blessed with a photographic memory and she had actually gone through the whole rule book three times since she entered the room. Every single rule for the disciples were now memorized word for word by now.

Yin Yan’s first move against Jun Wu Xie based on the assumption that she was unfamiliar with the rules had backfired onto him.

“You dared to answer back?” Yin Yan’s eyes had grown even more malicious. Any new freshman that had just been admitted into the Zephyr Academy were all known to be jittery and nervous before the seniors, although Yin Yan had tried to dig up an excuse and tried to teach Jun Wu Xie a lesson, the freshmen were expected to bow down to their seniority and swallow it up in humility, irregardless whether there was a valid reason or not!

Meeting such an audacious freshman was a first for Yin Yan.

“You’re too noisy.” Jun Wu Xie said as she shot Yin Yan a glare.

Yin Yan’s face paled further in fury.

The youth at the side saw that Yin Yan was about to lose his control and he rushed up immediately to tug at Yin Yan’s arm to say: “Senior Ning asked to see you, do not waste your time with this rookie here.”

Upon hearing the words “Senior Ning”, the gloominess on Yin Yan’s face faded. He cast a final vicious stare at Jun Wu Xie and turned to leave with the youth.

Silence fell once again within the room.

The black cat rubbed itself against Jun Wu Xie’s hand and said: [That numbskull seems to harbour quite a bit of hatred for you. Did you offend someone again while I was in a coma?]

In regards to its Mistress’ temperament, the little black cat knew only too well. She was never one to meddle in other people’s business and disliked stirring up trouble. But her cold and fiercely independent personality nevertheless had always attracted the displeasure of others like a magnet.

Just like the situation moments ago. Yin Yan’s attitude towards Jun Wu Xie might not have been too amicable, but for a freshman to be capable of slapping a senior with the words “You’re too noisy” right before another senior, there was no one else but its own Mistress.

Tact had never been a trait that could be found on Jun Wu Xie and the little black cat did not hold any hope that its Mistress would gain any of it in this life.

“Never met him.” Jun Wu Xie replied simply.

The little black cat sighed heavily. Its Mistress had never been someone people warmed up to at first sight. This was just their first meeting and the other party already harboured such intense enmity towards her.

The little black cat was still lamenting on its Mistress' provocative personality when on the other side of the door, the youth who had just come out of the room with Yin Yan could not stop himself but ask.

“What is wrong with you? Squabbling with a rookie like that. If you really find him obnoxious, just get someone to deal with him discreetly! You don't have to degrade yourself like that.” The youth said easily. In the Zephyr Academy, teaching the freshmen a lesson had always been the norm.

Yin Yan frowned and said: “He was brought in by Fan Jin.”

The youth was shocked a moment as he suddenly understood the reason for Yin Yan's actions.

“Even so, you can do it yourself then. He is just a rookie afterall, even with Fan Jin's protection, it would be easy for you if you want to give that kid a hard time. You are afterall a disciple of the Spirit Healer faculty and even if anything were to go wrong, no one would dare do anything to you.”

Yin Yan's brow finally smoothed out after hearing the youth's words and his mouth twisted into a malicious smile as he said: “Even without Fan Jin, the way that kid spoke to me earlier would not allow me to let her off easy anyway.”

Chapter 395: “A Disagreeable Roommate (3)”

The youth nodded readily but he felt a sudden chill in his heart. Yin Yan looked to be refined and gentle from the outside, but the vicious streak hidden beneath that exterior always sent goosebumps into him.

“What does Senior Ning want from me?” Yin Yan cast the matter with Jun Xie aside for the moment to ask of the youth.

The youth could only shake his head to reply: “Senior Ning didn’t say, but had only asked me to bring you to her.”

Yin Yan did not probe any further on it.

Moments later, the two of them came to the beast faculty’s library and on the second level of the library, a young girl dressed in the Zephyr Academy’s uniform was sitting by the window. Light rays shone in through the window and fell onto the girl, shrouding the girl in a mesmerising light.

The girl’s eyes were lowered, absorbed into the book she held in her hand.

Yin Yan stared at the figure engrossed in her book and cleared his throat lightly before saying: “Senior Ning.”

The young girl looked up from her book and her beautiful features overwhelmed Yin Yan imposingly. Her gaze from above suffocated him and he found it difficult to breathe.

Under the girl’s gaze, Yin Yan could not help but to lower his head.

The girl then shot a glance at the youth beside Yin Yan and the youth hastily left consciously.

The girl then proceeded to ask in a slow tone: “The new freshman under Fan Jin, is staying with you?”

Yin Yan replied: “Yes, I had only just found out just as well.”

The girl continued: “You’ve seen the freshman?”

“Yes.”

“How was it?”

“Very young, looks to fourteen or fifteen years old, and a small skinny frame. Looks unremarkable.” Yin Yan related honestly. If not for the fact that the freshman was brought in by Fan Jin into the room, he wouldn’t have even paid the new disciple any notice.

The girl shot Yin Yan a sideways glance: “If he’s unremarkable, how would Fan Jin bother to choose to mentor him?”

Although the Zephyr Academy had the tradition of having seniors mentor the new freshmen, the tradition however came with a few exceptions. The selection of the mentors had always been done by chance and nobody knew who would be selected.

But within those chances, stood two exceptions.

First, the disciples of the Spirit Healer faculty were exempted. There were already very few disciples in the Spirit Healer faculty and no one knew what criteria the Master Gu Li Sheng set for his selection of his disciples. Every year, only two or three disciples were accepted into the Spirit Healer faculty, and being accepted did not mean that one would always remain in the faculty. If Gu Li Sheng were to find the disciple unsuited to study to become a Spirit Healer in the course of their training, he would not hesitate to kick the disciple out of the Spirit Healer faculty. Past history had shown, that the two to three disciples recruited every year would always end up with only one single disciple remaining with the Spirit Healers.

As of now, the number of disciples in the Spirit Healer faculty only numbered around eight or nine of them in total.

But it was exactly those eight or nine disciples who were most envied throughout the whole Zephyr Academy! It was said that

those disciples did not have to shoulder any other tasks besides their training. The Zephyr Academy's only goal for them was to turn them into prominent Spirit Healers.

And besides the disciples of the Spirit Healer faculty, there was another group of people who were exempted from serving as mentors.

And that was those ranked within the top ten in the Spirit Battle Tournament!

The Zephyr Academy sets up a Spirit Battle Tournament at the end of every year. The various ring spirits were not categorised and all the disciples were gathered together to battle and the most outstanding top ten ranks would be selected from it.

Those ten disciples would be rewarded by allocating to them the best resources the Zephyr Academy had to give. Irregardless whether it was towards training or in other areas, they would enjoy better treatment than all the other disciples. The annual Spirit Battle Tournament at the end of the year was always the period the disciples of the Zephyr Academy competed the most fiercely with each other.

Fan Jin was ranked fourth in the last Spirit Battle Tournament last year and he had not needed to provide mentorship to any freshmen this year due to being exempted from taking up the laborious task that wasted time and effort.

Chapter 396: “A Disagreeable Roommate (4)”

Yin Yan nodded in understanding. Senior Ning’s words made him look at the entire situation from another perspective.

“But, I have seen the kid’s ring spirit as well, and it’s just a ordinary little black cat..... It didn’t seem to be extraordinary in any way.”

“Just an ordinary little black cat?” Senior Ning’s attractive face took on one of cold mockery. Her eyes looked at Yin Yan tinged with regret. “Do you think if the kid did not possess any capabilities and possessed only a little black cat, he would be directly admitted into the Zephyr Academy’s main division? Little Yan, you are still too young.”

Senior Ning’s words splashed like cold water on him, waking the ignorant Yin Yan up rudely.

He had only looked at Jun Wu Xie’s age and the unremarkable little black cat. But he had naively forgotten about the fact that Jun Wu Xie had been one of the few applicants that had successfully gained direct entry into the Zephyr Academy’s main division.

Yin Yan himself was an applicant who had been admitted directly into the main division and he naturally knew how difficult it was to achieve that feat.

Having been reminded, his contempt for Jun Wu Xie seemed to have tapered a little.

“Senior Ning is right as usual, your junior here has learnt something.” Yin Yan humbly acceded.

Senior Ning laughed, the sound a light tinkle, and without any other acknowledgement, she lowered her eyes back onto the book in her hand. However, without looking up, she continued to say:

“The fact that Fan Jin had gone on his own accord to take in the new disciple as his ward must have made you feel rather bitter, didn’t it? He had totally disregarded your existence before and now he is showing so much concern for a newly admitted disciple. It pains me to see the great disparity of his actions in the way he treats the two of you.

Senior Ning’s words cut like a knife on Yin Yan’s heart as the humiliating scene surfaced once again in his mind, and he was reminded once again by the pictures of his unforgettable disgrace. In the next moment, Yin Yan’s face had darkened terribly and his hands clenched into fists. His arms were held tight against his body and veins protruded on them, the only signs revealing his mightily suppressed rage.

Senior Ning’s face flashed with an almost unnoticeable smile but it very quickly faded away.

“But that is already a thing of the past, and I think Fan Jin must have deeply regretted it. You are no longer that ignorant freshman anymore and have made it into the Spirit Healer faculty. Compared to many of the other disciples, you would tower of them with your achievements. There is no need to wallow in self pity anymore.” Senior Ning gently placated Yin Yan, after having incited his rage and hatred under the mask of sympathy.

Yin Yan was oblivious to the fact that his emotions were being manipulated by a mere few words uttered by a young lady, all well within her control.

“Yes! I thank Senior Ning for your concern! I will never forget the humiliation I suffered that day. I am what I am today due to Senior Ning’s benevolence.” Yin Yan said with a cold laugh, his eyes narrowed at the memory.

[That’s right, he Yin Yan was already a member of the Spirit Healer Faculty and had earned the endless envy of countless other disciples. He was no longer trash that others despised!]

[Fan Jin, I will make you see, that the disciple you yourself have chosen, be reduced to become trash, before me, Yin Yan!]

Yin Yan's eyes grew more and more malicious and Senior Ning noted that change, and her chilling smile grew wider.

“I was willing to give you that chance, not out of pity, but because of the belief I have in your potential, and it was worth it for me to pave the way for you. You must not squander the efforts I have put in.” Senior Ning's voice was touching as it carried a tone that allowed no breach to its meaning.

“Rest assured Senior Ning, your wish is my wish. I will not disappoint you.” Yin Yan replied with a malicious smile.

Senior Ning beamed and raised her head at him: “Then, first go find out everything you can about the new disciple under Fan Jin's wing.”

Chapter 397: “Envy, Jealousy, and Hate (1)”

“Yes.” Yin Yan nodded.

Senior Ning was finally satisfied and waved dismissively at Yin Yan. He dared not protest in the slightest and obediently left the library of the Beast Spirit faculty.

Back in the dormitory, Jun Wu Xie was completely unaware of the series of trouble coming her way, brought about by the well intentioned arrangements Gu Li Sheng had specially made for Jun Wu Xie.

Seeing that Yin Yan was not back yet, Jun Wu Xie changed into the Zephyr Academy’s uniform. It was be said though, the Zephyr Academy with their exorbitant fees, had taken care of every single details very carefully. Even the uniforms of the disciples used the finest fabrics, but it was the least they could do afterall.

On the first day the new disciples were admitted, they would only be transferred to their respective faculties the next day. And on that first night, all of them were to go attend a lecture about the Zephyr Academy.

Before dinner, tens of the new disciples gathered in small groups of three to five and made their way towards the lecture. All of them were changed into their new Zephyr Academy uniforms, the young youths were all in smiles and in a jovial mood.

Jun Wu Xie walked into the room alone. Within the large room, all the other disciples were seated and Jun Wu Xie’s arrival attracted quite a bit of debate among the youths.

Every single disciple who was admitted in the same batch into the Zephyr Academy together with Jun Wu Xie, held great enmity against the unbelievably lucky youth. They all knew that the Spirit Healer faculty only accepted three disciples yearly and Jun Xie had taken up one spot before they were even officially admitted. That

had only meant that the competition for those highly vaunted places would be greatly intensified.

“I really don’t see what’s so special about that kid. Besides his spiritual power, he is inferior in every other aspect compared to us. Why should he get all the luck?” A new disciple complained as he cast a glance at the lone figure of Jun Xie in the corner, grumbling to his companions .

Jun Wu Xie was the youngest among all of them there and the next youngest among this new cohort who had been directly admitted into the main division was already fifteen and a half. Their spiritual powers were all still stuck in the red level, and the reason they had gained direct entry was due to the fact that they possessed rather powerful ring spirits.

It was a fact that in the beginning, the effect their spiritual powers had mattered little and people relied on the might of their ring spirits. The power strong ring spirits exhibited in the earlier stages was more obvious when compared to weaker ring spirits of similar level and the speck of spiritual power of the ring spirit holders at that stage was not important.

Until they reached the green level, would spiritual power gradually demonstrate greater effects. For people below the green level, they would still be helpless if they meet a powerful ring spirit as an opponent.

Like if a person was at the red level in his spiritual power and he possessed a grade three ring spirit, he would be able to completely overpower an orange leveled opponent.

Hence, even when Jun Wu Xie’s achievement of an orange level at fourteen had made many jaws drop, to these youths who were able to gain direct entry into the main division, they instead held powerful ring spirits. The weakest one among them was a grade three ring spirit and they did not need to fear someone just because he achieved the orange level.

“His luck will not stay with him forever. You think you would definitely become a Spirit Healer once you are admitted to the Spirit Healer faculty? For all the disciples accepted into the Spirit Healer faculty every year, only one person would remain in there. Looking at him, I do not think that he will last long in the Spirit Healer faculty.” The group of youths laughed and chuckled as they stared at the tiny figure, still silent in the corner.

With jealousy eating at their hearts, it made them yearn for Jun Xie to quickly fall from grace.

It was known, that once kicked out from the Spirit Healer faculty, they would not be allowed to stay on in the Zephyr Academy and was expelled completely.

Unfriendly stares came from all directions but Jun Wu Xie sat in the corner of the room completely unaffected. She just sat there quietly and gently stroked the little black cat in her arms.

Chapter 398: “Envy, Jealousy, and Hate (2)”

The noise quickly died down. Dressed in the Zephyr Academy’s uniform for teachers, a man walked onto the front of the stage. With a stern face, he began to explain to the new disciples about the three main faculties.

The disciples were simply picked and segregated into the various faculties based on their ring spirit’s type, with the exception of the Spirit Healer faculty. The criteria was a little different. When the man mentioned the words “Spirit Healer faculty”, all the ears in the crowd pricked up.

Before the new disciples had come here, they had heard a lot from their seniors. The selection of disciples to enter the Spirit Healer faculty was always conducted after the meet on the first night of their admittance into the academy, and Gu Li Sheng would pick the disciples personally.

That was the main reason the exuberant youths were willing to sit patiently throughout the long lecture on the attributes of Beast and Weapon Spirit which the directly admitted disciples had known very well about!

They were waiting the whole night for this! Just for this moment!

Gu Li Sheng!

The founder of the Spirit Healer faculty, and the founder of Spirit Healing. The man at the top of the golden pyramid, who looked like he was only in his twenties.

No one would ever have imagined, the one and only Spirit Healer, would be a young man looking just like being in his twenties, and founded Spirit Healing.

But, no one would actually naively believe that Gu Li Sheng was in his twenties.

In the eyes of the people across the vast lands, they only knew his identity as the founder of Spirit Healing, and the people knew he was in the Zephyr Academy.

But in regards to his origins, his background, his age and his prowess, they were all shrouded in mystery, and no one knew for sure.

Spirit Healers had never been heard of before Gu Li Sheng extended his assistance to heal his country's supreme leader's ring spirit. He became an overnight sensation after that and he soon became the name most highly sought after, and it in turn became his profession.

He started in the Zephyr Academy as a never heard of faculty, to become the place every single disciple of the Zephyr Academy yearned to be.

For those disciples studying Spirit Healing in the faculty, before the youths in there even became full fledged Spirit Healers, all of them would have received invitations from various powers within just the first one month they gained entry into the Spirit Healer faculty.

Gu Li Sheng was very lax with his disciples and besides teaching and guiding them in the art of Spirit Healing, he did not meddle much into their lives nor restrict them in any way. Hence, for the disciples admitted into the Spirit Healer faculty, irregardless whether they chose to serve under their own families' name, or to accept the olive branches offered by the various powers, their reputations and social standings had already grown wings before they even graduated!

It was very clear what having a Spirit Healer on their side would mean for any power, and if they succeeded in becoming a full fledged Spirit Healer, they would gain all they ever wanted and the future held endless possibilities.

All the youths below the stage waited in wide eyed anticipation,

waiting for the moment that was finally about to come. Even though Jun Xie had already stolen one of the available spots, at least one or two more among them still stood a chance to be admitted into the Spirit Healer faculty. Whether any of them would eventually become a Spirit Healer would be up to their own capabilities!

The man at the front of the stage stoically completed the full itinerary in a monotonous voice before he suddenly looked up and scanned the crowd of youths, who were all staring back at him with fire in their eyes.

Every year, at this point of the meet, the man knew exactly what the youths were all thinking.

But.....

This time he was about to disappoint them.

The man stayed silent a moment before he suddenly sighed heavily before saying: “I know very well that all of you are waiting eagerly for the arrival of Teacher Gu. But I am sorry to say that he would not be coming today.”

Chapter 399: “Envy, Jealousy, and Hate (3)”

The man’s words had just fallen into the ears of the crowd when a great roar erupted from the floor!

The youths had been greatly expectant and now, they stared at the man in utter disbelief, unable to stay seated on their seats.

Gu Li Sheng was not coming!?

Why was that!?

Had they changed the format and method in the selection of disciples to be admitted into the Spirit Healer faculty!? The youths were tumultuous as they looked on at the man, asking for further elaboration.

The man looked back at the crowd helplessly to say: “Master Gu has relayed his message that the Spirit Healer faculty’s disciple for this year has already been selected.”

Selected ! ?

The youths were all stunned.

When was the selection conducted?

Why were they not informed!?

The youths started discussing among themselves and many guessed that Gu Li Sheng had altered his method of selecting his disciples and had secretly observed all of their every single action upon their entry into the lecture room.

No one among them knew the exact criteria that Gu Li Sheng had set in his selection of his disciples and now that it was announced that the selection had been done, they could only guess that Gu Li Sheng had been within the room along and had been secretly observing all of them.

That conclusion made many of the youths extremely nervous as they recalled all of their actions throughout the lecture. They tried

to think back on whether they had been paying close attention to the lecture or had acted distracted and unfocused. They were all worried that they might have left Gu Li Sheng a bad impression.

Seeing that the youths were all heavily confused, the man could not help but heaved another great sigh before he cleared his throat and said: “Master Gu has already informed the disciple he had chosen to be admitted into the Spirit Healer faculty and for all those who have not received word by now, it would mean that you have not been selected and need not continue to second guess it any further.”

The youths stared blankly at the man before them and a revelation suddenly dawned upon them all.

The man had mentioned that “Master Gu has already informed the disciple”. He had said “disciple”, and not “disciples”.....

“Sir, Master Gu..... accepted how many disciples this year?” A youth who had caught on a little faster than the others asked cautiously as a horrible reality surfaced within his head.

The man replied: “Just one.” Cold water splashed onto all the youths within the room and their hearts dropped into their toes. The tiny glimmer of hope they all held flickered and was finally snuffed out!

One!?

The Spirit Healer Academy accepted only one disciple this year!?

How could that be?

All the youths were utterly devastated!

“Who? Who was this most fortunate person!?” This special favour shown on just one person among them drove the youths into a frenzy. They turned to look in all directions trying to locate that most fortunate person among them.

As they turned to peer all around, their gazes swept over a lone

tiny figure seated in a corner all by himself. Suddenly, their hearts froze and they stood unmoving, rooted to the ground.

Who?

Who else!

Damn it! Before that brat had even been admitted into the Zephyr Academy, he had already been invited by Gu Li Sheng to go see him at the Spirit Healer faculty! Who else would be the one selected but that brat there!

The youths had only been envious and jealous of Jun Xie before this. But upon knowing that the puny kid had stolen the one and only spot into the Spirit Healer faculty, their rage rose and intensified, coalescing into thick rolling hatred!

All of them were capable enough to gain direct entry into the main division, and they were youths of outstanding talents, praised as geniuses from where they were from. But despite all their magnificence, they had all been deemed inferior to a tiny and puny pipsqueak, who possessed a cold and distant disposition, and lost that one lone opportunity to become a Spirit Healer to him! That was such an outrage!

Even though the other faculties held greater might and power, they were nevertheless indignant that despite the great number of them, they were pushed out by such a character! ! !

All the tens of youths stared with their eyes on fire, all directed at the tiny figure of Jun Xie in the corner, wishing with all their might that the brat would just burn up in flames!

Chapter 400: “Envy, Jealousy, and Hate (4)”

Even the little black cat that was snoozing on Jun Wu Xie’s lap could sense the thick hatred coming from all those hate filled stares. It opened its eyes and looked at its calm mistress.

Jun Wu Xie’s face did not show any emotion and it was calm as if carved out of stone.

The little black cat covered its eyes with its paw. From another perspective, its mistress’ reactions were almost the same as an autistic child.

Before the little black cat could finish lamenting on its mistress’ oblivion to others, one of the youths had already stepped out and was walking towards Jun Wu Xie.

“The one that Master Gu chose, is it you!?” The youth still refused to give up and could not help himself but to ask.

Jun Wu Xie raised her head slowly and looked at the aggressive youth before her. She merely gave him one brief glance before she lowered her head once again to return to stroking the little black cat.

Finding himself ruthlessly ignored, a sudden fire burned within the youth. This kid is being unbelievably arrogant! Not a single word in reply but to just shoot him a contemptuous look! How could anyone take it lying down!?

If the little black cat had spoken then, it would have told the fuming youth this:

“Boy, you are getting it all wrong..... My mistress isn’t being arrogant, she is just a little speech impaired!”

In both her previous and present lives, she had not existed or lived in any social environment. Even after joining the organization, she had operated alone. In regards to such a place like an academy that had large numbers of people living in the

same place, this would be her first time being admitted into one.

When she had been in the Phoenix Academy, the whole East wing had only the few of them staying in it and it had not been too bad. But here in the Zephyr Academy, the place was filled to the brim with menacing eyes and hostility from people and Jun Wu Xie's self containing walls have naturally deployed in defense.

The effects of those walls had caused Jun Wu Xie to be labeled to be an haughty and conceited person, who held everyone in contempt!

Seeing that the youth was about to hit out at Jun Xie, the man warned for them to stop, preventing the tragedy that was about to occur. He told all the youths off sternly, preventing any altercation from erupting from the tense situation. As he scolded the youths, his eyes were invariably drawn to the inconspicuous figure seated in the corner.

That was the kid Gu Li Sheng had his eye on?

That personality was a little hard to take though.

Before the man had come to the lecture, he had met with Gu Li Sheng earlier and found out that the disciple that Gu Li Sheng had picked was among the group. He had come to the lecture with his curiosity aroused, but throughout the whole lecture, he had not noticed anything extraordinary about the boy, Jun Xie. The only thing that stood out was that personality of his. Since he had appeared till now, that kid had not even raised his head even once, and had only been toying with his ring spirit. He did not understand what was so outstanding about the kid.

The man had initially thought that since Gu Li Sheng had decided to only accept one lone disciple this year, the disciple must have been extremely outstanding. But now that he had seen the boy, that did not seem to be the case.

Although he had verbally stopped the other disciples from laying

their hands on Jun Xie, he felt that he did not really appreciate Jun Xie's personality.

A kid that was so individualistic would not have an easy time in his days ahead in the Zephyr Academy.

Right before dinnertime, the man finally decided to release all the new disciples.

The youths had not dared to defy the man and had not made any moves against Jun Wu Xie in the room but had intended to find themselves a deserted corner somewhere and teach the arrogant brat a good lesson. However, when the youths came out through the door, they all froze.

With his bright smile flashing, Fan Jin was standing just in front of the door. His tall frame allowed him to scan his eyes through the group of youths and he soon spotted Jun Wu Xie at the end coming out alone. Under the surprised gazes of the other youths, Fan Jin strode up with big steps towards Jun Wu Xie.

What was going on.....

Senior Fan Jin actually came all the way out here just to pick that puny brat up !! ?

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